

ABHISHEK VOL 11.0

01 THE LESSONS I LEARNED
FROM WRITING A NOVEL

32 FUMES TO FLAMES

43 CAPTAIN FANTASTIC



20 OLYMPIC HIGHLIGHTS

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Aitik Gupta

Whether it is the glorious tag of Grandmaster on Codeforces, landing an offer from one of the firms at MANGA, or even getting an article published in Abhishar - competitiveness drives a good chunk of the motivation behind all accomplishments. This year it isn't just about sports, but also about the driving force behind it; and with that impassioned footprint on our minds, reading brought an unfeigned smile on us editors with about every article - ranging from new experiences of freshers to seasoned writers and guidance from our alumni.

We hope you connect with the writers as we did, and relish the spirit of sportsmanship!

Harsh Sharma

Sports have always been an integral part of our lives, and so, with this edition of Abhishar, we endeavour to celebrate the very foundations of sports. As editors, we exulted in every article and were overwhelmed by the literary expertise of all the writers. We laud the efforts of the entire team, which culminated in the exquisite collection of wordsmanship that is this magazine. We hope that every single page will go on to inspire our readers, and we truly believe that all our readers will be able to instil within themselves the qualities of sportsmanship, resilience, teamwork and camaraderie as they indulge themselves in Abhishar v11.0!



Director's Note

It gives me immense pleasure to note that the annual magazine has evolved into its 11th edition. Year on year Abhishar is maturing and hosting variety of topics. Articles and poems from different realms with thought-provoking content make the magazine a must-read. I congratulate the entire team of AASF, whose commitment over all these years has made it reach the 11th edition of this fabulous magazine. I appreciate all the contributors for their decent contributions and wish the best in their future endeavours. I hope that Abhishar continues to shine and reach new heights as it evolves in the future.

Prof. Rajendra Sahu
Director, ABV-IIITM

Registrar's Note

I am delighted about the launch of the 11th Edition of Abhishar. It stands as a platform for students to express their ideas for good writing styles and show their imagination and ingenuity. I applaud the entire team for bringing forth the students' articles and expressing their literary talents. This is more than just a magazine and has become a symbol of rhetoricity and creativity and has come about as a result of the joint efforts of the Abhigyan Abhikashlam Students' Forum. I take this opportunity to warmly thank and congratulate all the contributors for their inspiring pieces of writing, which adorn the pages of Abhishar v11.0.

Shri Pankaj Gupta
Registrar, ABV-IIITM



FACULTY SPEAKS



Prof. Joydip Dhar
Prof, ABV-IIITM Gwalior

“

I heartfully congratulate the entire team for publishing the 11th edition of Abhishar. The commitment and hard work they put in for over a decade are appreciable. The space for content from across domains gives the students and alumni an excellent opportunity to express their talents and thus makes it a delightful read. I commend all the authors for their fantastic contribution and send them my best wishes.

”

“

I welcome the readers to this 11th edition of the Abhishar magazine. Abhishar is now fully matured with many varieties of articles that are enriching and interesting for its readers. The magazine provides a platform for both the contributors and the readers to virtually meet on a page in these difficult times of pandemic. I am confident that readers will enjoy the articles in this 11th edition and promote the magazine through various online platforms for its wider circulation.

”



Dr. K.K. Pattanaik
Asstc. Prof, ABV-IIITM Gwalior



Dr. Saumya Bhaduria
Asst. Prof, ABV-IIITM Gwalior

“

Abhishar's accomplishment of completing a long journey is laudable. Thought-provoking writings and in-depth analyses of current events have become a reflection of the entire team's dedication, devotion, and honest professionalism. I am sure that the future versions of Abhishar will command a prominent position in the library and have a significant impact on everyone's lives. I'd like to express my gratitude to all of the contributors for creating such a fantastic magazine.

”

“

It gives me immense pleasure to congratulate the Abhishar team for launching their 11th edition. The quality and diversity of this magazine have beautifully showcased the awareness and views of our students from upcoming technology to social issues. I really appreciate the contributions made by the editors and authors for Abhishar v11.0. I hope the Abhishar team continues the good work in the coming year as well and helps the student community grow.

”



Dr. Vinal Patel
Asst. Prof, ABV-IIITM Gwalior

Contents

Career Mantra

- 04. Hard Facts About Immigrating To The US
- 21. What College Does Not Prepare You For
- 39. Fail Small, Win Big!
- 43. Captain Fantastic
- 47. Life Problems: Fact Or Factitious
- 51. A Jack Of All Trades, Or A Master Of One?
- 57. The Art Of Technical Leadership
- 68. Perspectives On Software Thinking

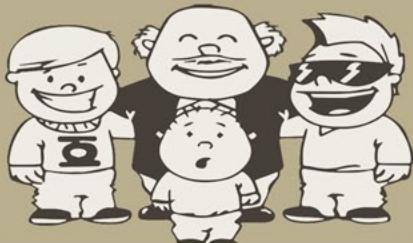
11. AASF Highlights



55. Adieu



45. Abhishar and Friends



Lifestyle

- 01. The Lessons I Learned From Writing A Novel
- 10. Who Doesn't Love Free Stuff?
- 13. To Do Or Not To Do
- 24. The Conundrum Of Having No Dreams
- 32. Fumes To Flames
- 40. New Semester Resolution
- 49. 5200 Weeks
- 52. Anime And Few Thoughts About It
- 60. Habit Tracker Guide: Why And How To Track Your Habits



28.
Memories

29.
Lifescape

Abhivyakti

18. A Brief History Of Writing

23. Zooming Out

25. A Relationship That Never Existed

38. Indian Education System: A Scapegoat Of Unneeded Criticism?

41. Changing Perception Towards Gender Stereotypes

54. Modern Day Slavery

59. Veganism

63. आओ आत्महत्या करें!

64. Food Wars

67. The Constant Pressure Of Being "Productive"

20.
Olympic Highlights

Geeks Corner

05. The Framework Without A Framework

16. Weakest Point In Cybersecurity: Human Element

34. Unlocking The Pot Of Gold

65. A Virtual Frankenstein

31.
Theme Page



A JOG DOWN THE SPORTS LANE

12.
Puzzle Zone



IITM Street

06. A Series Of Bursting Bubbles

17. An Ode To The Girls Hostel Rooms: A Legacy And Mystery For Juniors

35. 4 Years Of College In A Blink: Learnings & Mistakes

62. Web Development Amid The Pandemic

ABOUT AASF AND EVENTS

Being in an ever-changing world with technology galloping at a pace never seen before in history, the forum is laboriously engaged in organizing a variety of formal and informal events every year, which guide the students to adapt better in the techno-managerial world.

Activities are based on the concept of peer-to-peer learning.

TECHNICAL EVENTS

Linux and Hardware

Sessions/Workshops helping students learn the fundamentals of computer science and IT.

Web Month

Acquaintance to basic and advanced web development technologies like HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Node.js and SQL.

WJPS, Junior PCs and Online PCs

Frequent programming contests conducted to provide a perfect platform to practice.

git init FOSS, and A Guide to Open Source

A session on open source development, version control systems such as git, on approaching GSoC, and month long open source contribution.

Emerging Technologies

Session on various emerging technologies like ML, Blockchain, AR/VR, etc.

Winter Projects & Hackathon

Month long event for students to learn and build projects, and a 24-Hour Hackathon to inspire ideas.



MANAGERIAL EVENTS

Case Study Workshop

Managerial concepts to handle stories which present complex and realistic situations that often involve conflict.

Case Study Contest

Aimed at improving analytical skills to solve an issue at hand.

Corporate2Campus - Managerial Sessions

Sessions delivered by Corporate Professionals to ace managerial skills required for the industry.

Corporate2Campus - HighT

Fun and interactive events for students to interact with professionals from the industry.



ORATORY & LITERARY EVENTS

Jest A Minute (JAM)

A fun event in which participants have to speak without hesitation and deviation and are challenged by opponents.

Group Discussion

An event involving a lot of group dynamics to enhance the students' oratory and analytical skills.

Mock Interview Series

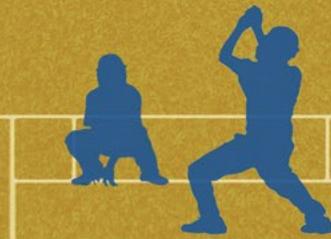
Interviews with esteemed alumni to boost communication and interview skills.

Experiencia

A session for the younger batches to interact with their seniors and learn about resume building, career options, etc.

Technical Blog Writing

A platform for the tech-enthusiasts to pen down their learnings and knowledge for the world to see.



EVENTS AND HIQS

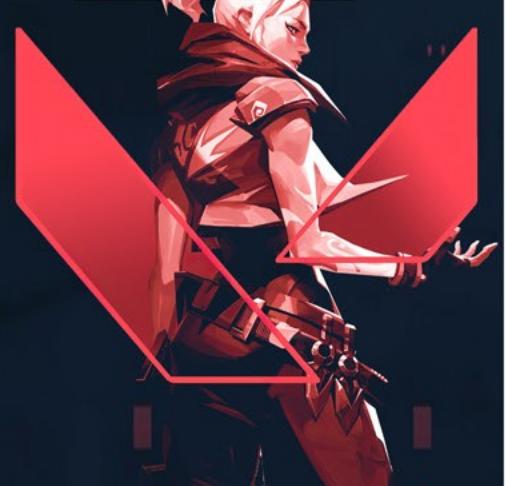


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I believe esports will rival the biggest traditional sports leagues in terms of future opportunities, and between advertising, ticket sales, licensing, sponsorships and merchandising, there are tremendous growth areas for this nascent industry.

- Steve Borenstein

Chairman of Activision Blizzard's Esports Division
and Former CEO of ESPN and NFL Network



01

THE LESSONS I LEARNED FROM WRITING A NOVEL

Abhishek Pratap Singh

IMG - 2017



In my second year of college, I wrote a 225-page adventure thriller, and it changed my life for the better in ways I could never have anticipated. And this piece is an ode to all that I learned on one of my most treasured voyages.

Like many explorers, when I decided to venture into the world of writing a book, I stumbled upon great many things. Shakespeare once said, "*All that glitters is not gold*", and I sure found a number of shiny glorified things associated with writing that were just not true.

But I think that more important than Shakespeare's saying is that of Tolkien's, who once said that, "*All that is gold does not glitter*". Both the sayings have the same words, yet they mean such different things. Language is beautiful in that way - how a little change, changes everything. And surely enough, while writing my book, I discovered many treasures that I never knew even existed.

So let's start at the beginning, shall we? As I know it would be true with most people who have created any kind of art, the first book of mine that saw the light of the world wasn't the first one I attempted to write. In fact, I had tried writing a book three times before, only to realise mid-way in each attempt that I still needed more practice, and had to return, disheartened, to the training grounds.

When you start creating art for the first time after having been admiring it for long, that's when you are really forced to confront the inadequacy of your skills. And let me tell you, it's absolutely heart-shattering. Because for a long time, it felt like a curse - to be able to appreciate a form of art and to yearn so desperately to create something worthwhile through it, but to always end up failing spectacularly in every attempt.

And that is the harsh reality of pushing your boundary. I don't tell you this to scare you, I tell you this to prepare you. Because most of the media glorifies the process of creating something, and when things don't play out that way, it becomes really hard not to give up. This is why the greatest tales never get told, the best songs are never sung, and the best paintings are never made - it's because most of the artists give up too soon, it's because most of the art never gets created. So how does one get out of that cycle of feeling not good enough? Honestly, no one ever really does. This is one of the oldest stories, and there are no other endings to it. The best we can do is to practice our art enough that it starts a simultaneous cycle of awe. Only through an ardent amount of practising our art and dealing with disappointments can we fight our way through and reach

the point of creating something, the sight of which induces awe, even in our own eyes.

And no one is immune to those disappointments, including me. This is perhaps the apt place to share my favourite phrase of my book, which is its subtitle, "*A ride you never took to the world that never was*". As a subtitle, it checks all the boxes. It sounds great, it's a good wordplay, it piques interest, but most of all, it is a metaphor.

One interpretation of the phrase is simply that it's a story about a fictional land. But the other one is closer to my heart. It's a reminder that there were so many times when I came so close to giving up on creating the world that I am so proud of today.

Once you reach that point that your art starts to sometimes astonish you, then like they say, the hardest part of writing a book is starting it - until you start and realize that continuing to write it to completion is way harder. And that is the hardest part until you get to editing, because that's where your writing skills get tested within the container of your patience, something that is seldom fun, but is always worth every second spent on it.

In all honesty, creating any kind of art is a tedious, time-consuming, and cumbersome process. But now that you have read through the heart-wrenching parts, I'll share with you the

LIFESTYLE
ABHISHAR v11.0



heartwarming ones too. And truth be told, creating your kind of art is also the most liberating, soothing, and therapeutic experience ever.

Remember how I said that I gave up writing the book many, many times? I also came back to it every time. Never forced, always on my own, and because I missed it. Sometimes all I needed was a little time and space to sort through the impossible task of ever completing a book, while at other times, a little perspective was enough to do the trick.

But I came back to it every time, because like Maya Angelou once said, *"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you"*. At the end of the day, all our lives are just stories, and I came back to it even though there were days when it consumed too much of me, because the chance to share a part of my imagination is in itself an honour like none other.

I also learned that writing is the most natural form of expression for me. And I cannot emphasize enough on how powerful that kind of knowledge is - I have worked through many issues in my life by writing about them because that helps me understand my thoughts better. For someone else, it would be through a different art form, but whatever the form is, to have a tool that helps you understand and express yourself is indeed a boon.

I remember that there were times

when I would wake up at 3 in the night and start writing because I wanted to. When I was finishing the book, I had a fever but I kept writing because nothing else mattered. And I still remember how I felt the moment I submitted it to be published. I got reminded of how unfathomable the task seemed a mere year ago, how incapable I once used to feel of my own abilities, how unsure of myself I once used to be - and now I had tangible evidence in response to all those insecurities. If you ever decide to read my novel, which is available as an ebook on Amazon, then one of the first sentences you will encounter would be, *"Survival of the Unfittest is a dream come true, and dreams are often found buried beneath boulders that a mere pair of hands can't budge"*. It is, perhaps, one of the truest sentences that I have ever written.

Because for any dream to come true, it needs to wither through a lot of winters, and when the hope in your heart starts dying, as it often did in my case too, it's essential that you have a safe space that nurtures your smoulders for long enough so that they can ignite a fire again.

In my case, this support was in two parts. The first was through my best friend, Himanshi, who time and again believed in my dream, especially when I couldn't. She is also a wordsmith herself, so her insights and ideas

were immensely valuable. The second was Quora, my playground of creative writing, where I would go every time I needed to hone my skills.

And perhaps the most unexpected discovery that I made by writing a book was learning how my mind works. I had documents containing all the metadata for the novel, the summation of plots, the threads, the dialogues, the references. How things diverged as the plot developed and how they came together as it resolved. I learned that I am pretty good at structuring and organising information, so much that I am now actively trying to make a career out of it.

So that's the story of how an IT Engineer, after discovering his love for creative writing, realised that becoming a technical writer is what is right for him. And as obvious as it looks in hindsight, I truly didn't see it coming. So this, this is perhaps the biggest gift of them all, and it was only possible because on one fine April noon, I gave in to the impulse of writing a scene that was in my mind - a scene that eventually snowballed into a full-blown novel.

To anyone who is thinking of pursuing an art, all I want to say is to not think too much about it and just dive right in. Sure, you most probably would never get paid enough to make a living out of it, but that's okay, because money, I've learned, should never be the

purpose of art in the first place. It can be a consequence, but it should never be the purpose.

And perhaps the last lesson I learned is that everything comes with a price. Abandoning your art will cost you a piece of your soul, but pursuing it will not come easy either. Two roads diverge in the yellow woods, and there is none through which you can come out unwounded. So pick your battle and fight.

Spending ten months of my

second year writing a book meant not spending that time on learning different technologies. It meant dealing with the feeling of getting left behind, because in those moments, all my friends were doing things that they knew would help them in their careers, while I was doing something that seemed utterly unrelated. And that was scary. It was also one of the best decisions I ever made in my life.

I would like to end by paraphras-

ing W.H. Auden, whose verses perfectly encapsulate the wonder that dawns upon you every time you create a piece of art you barely believed you ever could,

"But once in a while the odd thing happens,

Once in a while the moon turns blue.

And the whole pattern of life is altered,

Once in a while the dream comes true". ☘



Kuldeep Mangla

IMG-2020

मातृभाषा हिंदी



विभिन्नताओं का संगम, मैं उस देश का
वासी हूँ,

कहलाता है जो भारत और हिंदी का
अभिलाषी हूँ।

हिंदी हमारे देश की हर बोलती
आवाज है,

हिंदी हमारी आत्मा, हिंदी हमारा
मान है।

हिंदी से हम बने, हिंदी से हम जुड़े,
हिंदी हमारी चेतना वाणी का शुभ
वरदान है।

माँ के प्रेम की छाया हमारी मातृभाषा है,
इसलिए प्यार से कहो, हिंदी हमारी
भाषा है।

एक साथ एक स्वर में, हमने यह
ठाना है,

मातृभाषा को अब राष्ट्रभाषा का दर्जा
दिलाना है।

भारत माँ को दर्शाती, मीठी से यह
भाषा है,

गर्व से कहो, हिंदी हमारी भाषा है।
भारत देश के वासियों ने मिलकर

पुकारा है,
हिंदी हैं हम और हिंदी हमारी भाषा है।





Irita Mishra
IPG - 2013

HARD FACTS ABOUT IMMIGRATING TO THE US

04

Even though India offers a substantially satisfactory quality of life, too many of us have always wanted to settle abroad. The society also lauds individuals who decide to shift to the US and other countries. It is as if your worth quadruples the moment you tell people that you are moving out of India. It is sad that life abroad looks so glittery that it induces so much praise and jealousy.

While I will not sing songs in praise of my life here, I will say that the US certainly has a charm. The lack of pollution, population and mosquitoes is commendable. But it is worth noting that India feels like home. The food, love and household help are things available in India that one mustn't take lightly. People in the US are usually so isolated that it is tough to connect with them how you would connect to people in India. That is why Indians usually stay and hang out with other Indians living in the US.

I listed the pros and cons of living in the US in a previous Abhisar article. My goal for today is to share ways in which you can come to the US. While there might be more information out there, I am sharing my knowledge after living in the US for 3.5 years. So here you go:

Option 1: Enroll in an MS program. A couple of years of work experience in India can land you in a good university in the

US. You will arrive in the US on an F-1 visa, a.k.a student visa. Once you graduate, you can apply for an H-1B visa or a work permit. However, this visa is granted using a lottery-based system. If your field falls under STEM, you get three chances to apply for the H-1B visa lottery. If not, you get only one. Until you are granted the H-1B visa, you can work on OPT, a type of work authorization that permits F-1 students to gain work experience. After getting your H-1B visa, you can stay up to 6 years in the US. Most people apply for a Green Card (GC) right after they get their work permit. However, it is essential to note that the current waiting time for a GC is at least 10 years, if not more.

Option 2: Marry someone who holds a GC or US citizenship. You will be able to apply for work once you get your own GC. If you have an immediate family member in the US, you might be eligible for a GC through family sponsorship. Just FYI, a GC provides permanent residency in the US, but you have to go through a citizenship test to become a US citizen lawfully, meaning that you will have to forfeit your Indian citizenship too.

Option 3: Arrive in the US on an L-1 visa. It is usually granted to people who get on-site opportunities. Amazon is one such company that sends talented

employees to the US on this visa. Of course, you have to prove to be indispensable enough to be considered. Alternatively, if you own a business in India for over a year, you can obtain an L-1 visa by opening an office or new business in the US. You may be able to apply for a GC or H-1B visa as an international manager or executive after a year on an L-1 visa.

Option 4: If you're filthy rich, you might want to consider the EB-5 visa. This visa requires you to invest in and run a business like a gas station, startup or any other ready-made franchise like Subway, Dominos, etc. As long as you invest around \$500,000 or more and employ at least five people in that business, you can fast track your way into US permanent residency, a.k.a GC. I hope that this article will guide you to make responsible immigration decisions in your future. I had a whimsical quip to share with you all, but it seems that I ran out of words. So, this is all for now!

PS: Please note that this is just my personal opinion and knowledge that I have gathered over time. You should refer to expert opinion and/or consultancies if you plan on shifting to the US. ☘

Irita Mishra is pursuing her PhD from Georgia Southern University.

CAREER MANTRA
ABHISHAR V11.0





THE FRAMEWORK WITHOUT A FRAMEWORK

Aaryak Shah
IMT - 2019



Frontend development is a constantly evolving field. In an age where people have shifted focus away from old static websites and are moving towards more robust web applications, it has become very apparent that the plain and simple HTML, CSS, and JavaScript stack just isn't versatile enough. Enter frameworks--and a large number of them. From the popular React and Angular to many you have probably never heard of, they power a lot of modern web applications.

Frontend frameworks offer many benefits over a vanilla HTML site, and all of them have their own unique features and quirks. But most, if not all of them offer the ability to make reusable components and a reactive UI. However, in order to obtain the features they have, frameworks give up other aspects in exchange. If there's something good to be said about basic HTML-CSS-JavaScript websites, it's their simplicity. The added features require added syntax and rules. And with these comes a huge bulk of library code that makes all this new stuff work in a browser. This inflates application size by a lot and can even impact performance.

And here, I would like to introduce a diamond in the rough known as Svelte. This is a FOSS project started by Rich Harris, and unlike many of its competitors, it is independent and not

backed by a corporation. Often described as a framework without a framework, Svelte brings the best of both worlds to the table. It is an elegant solution to the tradeoffs of frontend development. It is often clubbed into the category of "frameworks" - but on the inside, it is something fundamentally different. While most conventional frameworks strive to interpret components and render them on the fly (in a system known as virtual DOMs), Svelte instead takes the compiler approach. Your framework-like component-based project is compiled early on, at build time. What you deploy at the end is actually just a pure HTML-CSS-JavaScript application.

This approach works so well because the typical framework system targets the convenience factor for developers. Browsers are never looking to interpret a React component tree as they, after all, only understand HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. Frameworks usually try to get around this by sending huge libraries to help your browser understand their code, but Svelte handles it by simply doing the conversion beforehand, easing the load on the client. This reduces application sizes and helps your app achieve performance levels that are as close to pure HTML as possible. All the while, you have a smooth development experience with all the convenience and

tooling you desire.

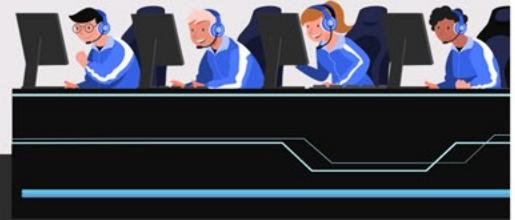
As an added bonus, Svelte also massively simplifies component syntax because it no longer needs to be confined by the bounds of what JavaScript can do. No longer do you need to write functions and ES6 classes to represent components. No longer do you need to write Hooks nor deal with the "this" keyword. With Svelte, components look deceptively close to pure HTML and CSS, and in some contexts, they are even indistinguishable.

Svelte specific syntax is very minimal and easy to understand. This makes learning Svelte very easy, and it does not take much deciphering for an outsider to understand your code.

With all of that said, we must acknowledge that Svelte is not quite the best framework, yet. Svelte is a relatively new technology, and it has a smaller community than its competition. You may not find a solution to your issue, and some bugs may forever go unexplained. However, in my experience using it, I have never found a problem that wasn't fixable with enough effort or that didn't have simple workarounds. If anything, I believe that now is the time for more people to get involved with Svelte and build a robust community. I encourage you, the reader, to try your hands on it, and who knows, it might just become your new favourite. ☘



ABHISHAR v11.0





Guna Shekar Proddaturi
BCS - 2018

A SERIES OF BURSTING BUBBLES

06

A few years before starting college, I came across the term "Ethical Hacker". I wanted to be one ever since, and that was the precedent for me choosing to take up Computer Science in my senior secondary school and major in it in my undergrad. A few days into college, I realised that this wasn't going to be as easy as I thought it would be, and I broke out of the bubble I was living in. Given this and other experiences I've had over the last three and a half years, an apt phrase to describe my college experience would be "A Series of Bursting Bubbles." It wasn't easy coming to terms with things I had long believed to be true, but it was absolutely essential for me to do so in order to move forward. This article is a collection of experiences that helped me break free from several bubbles I was living in. I hope you take a thing or two to take away from this and maybe start thinking in a slightly different way about things you've always believed to be true.

1. It was one of the first days of college, and classes had not yet begun. While I was sitting in BH2 room 231 not knowing what to do (or more accurately, what to study because, of course, I had to stay ahead of the crowd), my neighbour came in and asked if he could spend some time here because his room was being painted. I gladly agreed to his request, and we began talking. He

then opened his laptop, which he said had an operating system called "Arch Linux." I was visibly confused at the fact that there existed an operating system other than Windows that ordinary people used (though he turned out to be nowhere near ordinary, but instead turned out to be a God). He was kind enough to confuse me even more by opening a black screen which was apparently called the "Terminal". He showed me how he has a "script" that changes his desktop's wallpaper every few minutes. I somehow yawned my way through this episode, realising that there's a lot left to learn.

While this encounter was still afresh, I had another visitor in my room, not many days later. He talked to me about the field of "Competitive Coding", how it's exciting and how he enjoys taking part in contests. He asked if I wanted to solve a problem on a website called "HackerEarth", and I said yes. It should've been pretty easy for me; I had a 100/100 in 12th-grade Computer Science, after all. Sweet summer child, how adorable. The website loaded, and a question appeared on the screen. While I was biting my nails trying to understand the question, Mr Genius had already come up with a solution. As hard as it was for me to digest, I wasn't able to understand what was happening, neither the question

nor the solution he proposed. Another very interesting incident happened towards the end of my first year. A couple of classmates and I decided to take part in Web-Kriti, a web development contest. We were three of the smartest people in our batch, and it only made sense for us to develop a mind-blowing web application and wipe the floor with the rest of the participants. And we really thought we did until we had a chat with the judges during the presentation. We had our heads so far deep down you know where that we, for one whole month, believed that we were developing a good looking and smoothly functioning website. The judges pointed out the obvious to us, and that's when we realised we had a logout button floating around in a page, almost as if we wanted our users to exit our application. We used shades that would probably look good in a living room but most definitely not on a website, and for God's sake, we did not have a primary key on our database tables.

Never overestimate (or underestimate, but that's for another day) yourself. No matter how smart you think you are, there is always someone smarter than you - that's what a good college can offer you. Learn from them and implement your learnings to the fullest.

2. My first semester went by pretty quickly, but it was very



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ABHISHAR v11.0



productive. I managed to obtain a high CGPA which went on to save me for the rest of my college life because having a good previous record instils a bias in everyone that helps you secure a good future record. I got pretty good at coding, and I was doing well with online contests too. I was on my way to doing even better this semester, getting a great CGPA again, becoming an expert at competitive coding, getting into Software Development through Web Development or other such fields and a hundred other things. Around 30 days into my second semester, I was hospitalised with a protein deficiency. I had to stay at the hospital for a couple of nights and pay them several visits. This obviously hampered my plans and put me behind many people, or so I thought and demotivated me for quite some time.

Everyone has good times and bad. I had my good, and it was time for me to take a hit. I do not have a right to question why such a tragedy happened just to me. Accept your bad times and embrace your good; everything shall pass, and something new shall show up.

3. Things got better soon once I got back on my feet. I managed to win a couple of coding contests with my newfound teammates, along with whom I decided to take part in an intra-city Hackathon organised by the brilliant folks responsible for

this magazine. This was going to be our very first Hackathon, and we barely had an idea about what we had to do in one. We hacked our way through the competition (quite literally, we pulled off some shady tricks, which I can have a laugh about now in hindsight, but I would've wet my pants if they had failed back then) and managed to build a semi-decent looking and partially functioning website. We gave an excellent presentation and won the second prize overall. But the thing we were super proud of back then wasn't the fact that we were second overall, but the fact that we were above every other first-year team. We were ahead of our competition, we were better than all of them and it mattered a great deal.

With the confidence and clout we received, we decided to participate in a national-level Hackathon. A classmate of ours sent a message in our group, promoting a Hackathon being organised by SGSITS, Indore, which would be a 24-hour long Hackathon. They were also offering free food for those 24-hours, which was all the more reason to visit that college. The first round was a pitch write-up round, where we had to give a detailed description of a solution to one of their problem statements. One of their problem statements was a perfect use-case for Blockchain (or again, so I thought), and this was a technology I was getting my hands dirty

with off-late. We drafted a lengthy write-up about how we could approach that problem, and we were selected for the finals to visit their campus and participate in the on-site round. After an overnight journey from Gwalior to Indore, we reached the campus of SGSITS, checked in, and took our seats in the "Hacking Room". We soon got to know that we would be presented with new problem statements for the final round, and our initial write-ups were just a check on our ability to determine whether we were good enough for finals. We were still pretty confident in ourselves, we could develop web applications, and I could sprinkle a bit of Blockchain to make our project look cool. It turned out each of the problem statements were related to Machine Learning, a term to which I only knew the spelling. One of our teammates struggled to learn a couple of concepts overnight and build a bare minimum project, and I added Blockchain anyway - the project had to look cool after all. We obviously didn't manage to win this one, but we did give a decent presentation and save face. The winners, however, gave a fantastic presentation, and we were completely awestruck by the kind of technologies they used in their projects. We did have two good takeaways from this trip, though - one, the free food that included pizza, garlic bread, a Subway sandwich and



much more, and two, the organisers were super sweet and extremely helpful, and they went on to help me a couple of times on unrelated matters later on as well. While there are so many learnings and burst bubbles in this experience, from understanding not to cling on to a technology but to the problem at hand, to understanding that building long-term connections, irrespective of a bad experience, can prove to be beneficial, I would like to focus on another one.

Your classmates and peers in college are not really your competition. There is a whole wide world out there trying to knock you down, given one chance, and shutting your laptop down so that your friend doesn't see what you've been learning isn't going to make it any better. Rather than treating your peers as your competition, try collaborating and learning together. As one of my beloved seniors wrote in her article in Abhishar v10.0, "reaching the top together is always more fun".

4. Just before the summer vacation post my first year, The Rotaract Club of Youth, IIIT Gwalior, organised a counselling session to help us make the best use of our vacation. Until that point, I had made up my mind to learn more about Web Development using Angular.js and Node.js in my vacation.

In that session, one of our seniors, Saurabh Gupta sir, made a very casual comment on how and why he doesn't like Angular.js and why he prefers React.js more, and I took that comment as advice and learned React.js instead.

At about the same time, I was fortunately chosen as a batch representative of AASF, our institute's techno-managerial forum. The forum coincidentally required a revamp for their mobile application, and since I had learned React.js, it was fairly easy for me to learn React Native and build the mobile application for them.

While most of my batchmates and seniors were getting into the field of Machine Learning, I decided to pursue a weird field called Blockchain. Not a lot of people pursued Blockchain back then, and that was a pretty good reason for me to pursue it. I spent my summer learning about this field along with Web Development and Mobile Application Development. A couple of months into my second year, I had a chat with a senior, Hitesh Ahuja sir, asking him to help me find internships in this domain. I'm not sure why I decided to ask him and not anyone else, considering there were other seniors I was more familiar with. In our conversation, he briefly mentioned a company named Zubi, which was just a month old, was

Blockchain oriented and was hiring. There was no chance in hell someone other than him would've known about that company. I explored their careers page and discovered a React Native internship, a technology I knew because I was given the opportunity to develop a mobile app for AASF because I knew React.js, which I learnt because of a comment by another senior. I decided to apply for that role and received an email from them a couple of weeks later. I went through a couple of rounds of interviews and cleared them, and looking back, getting into this company was the breakout point in my journey as a developer and the sole reason I am where I am today. I not only worked on React Native but also on backend and frontend development, and those experiences were the reason I was able to clear critical interview rounds that led me to having a full-time job. The one-month-old company that I randomly discovered from a conversation with a senior also organised a Blockchain Bootcamp, where I got to know more than I ever did from tons of other courses I had taken up earlier. The learning from this Bootcamp eventually opened up a Fellowship opportunity at Tezos India Foundation, another of my cherished experiences.

Putting hard work, dedication, consistency and all the other words people ask you to be on



one side, luck plays an irreplaceable role in one's career, at least a technology career. Don't kid yourself by saying that the only reason you're doing well is because of your hard work, dedication or consistency. I would've probably been a totally different person right now if I had decided not to attend the counselling event or chosen to ignore the subtle comment made by my senior. Acknowledge and appreciate the role of luck in what you are today.

5. After a wonderful time working with the companies I mentioned above came the most important and the most dreaded time in a technology student's college life - the internship season. While some of us were deciding which Monday would be perfect to start our preparation, we got the news that one of our batchmates had

already received an internship offer from one of the world's best technology companies. I made my peace with it eventually, and I genuinely am happy for where they are right now, but the only thought I had running at that point of time was of the fact that someone had received an offer, while I didn't even know about the existence of the opportunity. They were also a placement representative, and it was their responsibility to share this opportunity with the rest of us, right? Wrong.

I see a lot of hatred towards placement representatives; someone even channelled it into an email and sent it to the whole college about how their batch's representatives did not share opportunities they discovered themselves and were in no way related to the college. I'm sure that several readers who're currently in their internship or job season feel the same way.

Nobody owes you anything, and nobody has an obligation to help you - neither with sharing openings nor with anything else. I know I wrote about how going to the top together is more fun, but someone putting themselves above you is in no way a crime. So the next time someone doesn't share an opportunity with you, and they get it themselves, suck it up because it was never their "duty" to do so in the first place.

Over the last few years, if there's one thing I've realised, that would be to take things with a grain of salt. You never know when you might realise you were wrong all the way. I certainly did plenty of times and came out of the bubbles I was living in. I hope you question yourself from time to time, come out of bubbles, and see things, the world, and the people in it from a different perspective. ☘

Did you Know?



Michael Phelps holds the all-time records for Olympic gold medals (23), Olympic gold medals in individual events (13), and Olympic medals in individual events (16), making him the most successful and most decorated Olympian of all time.

Phelps retired from competitive swimming for the second time, following the Rio Olympics in 2016 where he won five gold medals and one silver medal. At 31 years old, his performance was considered a unique achievement for an athlete well beyond the typical peak for male swimmers.





It used to be fun going to Walmart as a kid and trying out food samples for free. My obsession for free stuff is never ending. This made me do a little research regarding free samples online, and I was amazed to see the results. And I can't wait to share it with you! How many of you know that you can get free food on your birthdays? Right away, go to the nearest Baskin Robin store and get ice cream for free or visit the nearest Starbucks store and grab a free tall-sized drink on your birthday. This isn't it. Let me give you a short tour of free samples online. So basically, free samples are provided to test and review the product. How does this benefit the brand? This isn't something new. This is as common as the marketing policy followed by any brand. Remember when you were a kid, and one of your classmates gave you a bar of chocolate for free - you got so excited that you still remember their name even now. This is exactly what happens in this case. When a particular brand offers you a free product, it instantly creates an impression in your mind. Well, this isn't something that we need to regret because

it's not just the brand that is benefiting but also us - we get free stuff! There's something more interesting - Have you ever participated in a survey? Some websites conduct surveys, and since you invested your time, you get something in return. For example, you spent 15 mins of your time answering a survey and in return, they offer you a discount coupon on Zomato or Amazon. So, filling out surveys isn't a bad idea either. These days certain websites have started a new trend of awarding points on filling out surveys, and these points add up to get some reward or a coupon. Have a lunch break or some extra free time? Start filling out surveys and you can easily make upto Rs. 1000 a day.

This is not just limited to trying out a sample product of a newly released brand. Brands give away products that are going to be at the end of their shelf-life soon. Suppose a particular product is designed to have a shelf-life of 12 months, and the product was not purchased by anyone for 10 months. Since the chances of someone buying this product now are quite less, brands start giving them out for free, letting the

customers use them for the next two months. This may not always be advisable, but you can definitely try it out once if the product is new to you. These days, the competition for free samples has increased, and brands cannot afford to provide all the desired free samples. So, they have started the concept of lucky draw. If there are 500 free samples and there are 2000 people, then they declare the winners with a lucky draw. While you can try this, it solely depends on your luck.

To make your experience easier, here are my suggestions for some apps and websites that give away free samples online in India.

Websites: FreeKaaMaal, Free Mania, Free Cosmetic Testing, MyFreeProductSamples, Nykaa, Toluna, Survey Junkie, LifePoints, MyPoints.

Apps: Smitten, Viggle, Shopkick. Do try out these apps and websites and apply for free stuff! Try filling out surveys and start earning. This way, brands can start improving their products based on your surveys and feedback. This is just the beginning, try to dig deep - who knows what might be in it for you! ☺☺

Did you know?

20% of customers state they spend more on off-premise orders contrasted with standard dine-in-experience.

AASF HIGHLIGHTS

2019-20

A Deep Dive Into Machine Learning, Web Month, Golang Bootcamp, A Guide to Open Source, Mock Interview Series, Corporate2Campus, Javascript Bootcamp, Blockchain hIQ, Technical Blog Writing

2013-15

AASF-ICPC, Composition De'l Image, Robotics Workshop, Hardware Workshop, Android hIQ, Website Launch

2016-18

Hackathon, RJIT and MITS Chapters, Website Relaunch with Student Profiles, Python-Git hIQ, Game Dev. hIQ, Onsite Hackathon, Developers' Circle and Coding Group, Winter Projects



2010-12

German Language Session, Android, Flash, JAM, Abhisar v1.0 Launched, Online Programming Contest, Sports Quiz

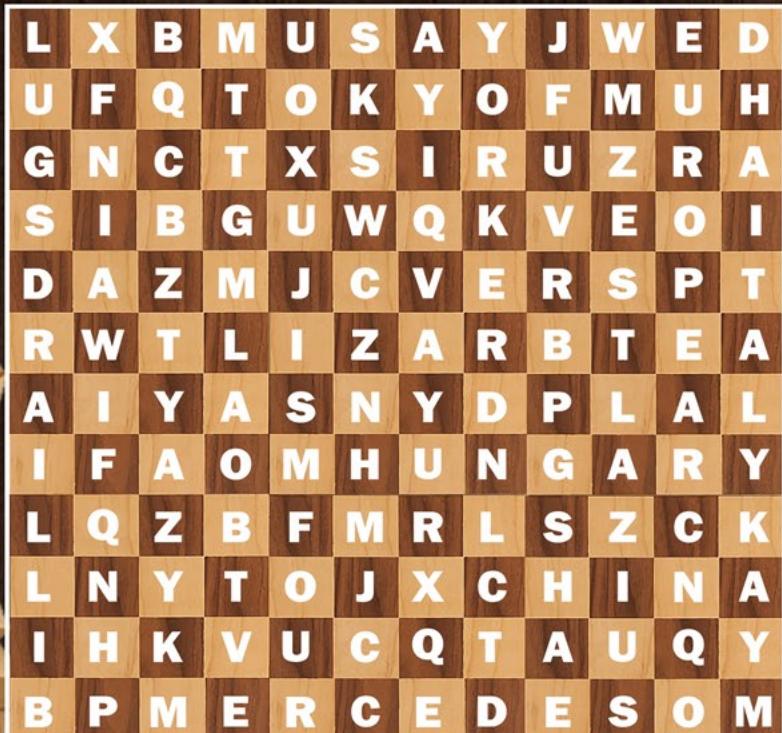
2007-09

Overnight Coding Contest, "Pragyanki" Magazine of AASF, AASF Conceptualized "Coalescence of Knowledge and Skills", Logo of AASF

2003-06

Inauguration of IETE Students' Forum, Paper Presentation Contest, "Abhigyanam" Renamed as "Abhigyan", Hardware Workshop, Renamed as IIITM's Students' Forum

PUZZLE ZONE



Which country has the most medals in fencing?



Which is the first Asian city to host the Olympics?



Which country has won the most FIFA world cups?



How many Tennis grand slams are held in a year?



Where were the 2021 World Judo Championships held?



Which country won maximum medals in Paralympics'21?



What is it called when a ball is bowled at the batsman's feet?



Which continent does the blue ring in the Olympic rings denote?



Which sport did Pankaj Advani bag a gold medal in Asian Games'10?



Whom did Lewis Hamilton represent in the 2021 F1 World Championship?





When life gives you lemons, you can do a zillion things with it. But when life throws you into the middle of a pandemic, right when you were planning to start a new chapter of your life, you're Nero playing the fiddle while the world burns down. For more than a year, we have fought for and hung on to whatever semblance of life was left, with an unspoken understanding that we will get back to normal one day, we will laugh like before, and nothing will have changed. Nevertheless, a lesson in resilience is the least we could take away from a global pandemic so that when we return, like Neitzche said, it would have made us stronger.

Like every other pandemic story, mine too started in March 2020. I had packed my bags to go to a new hire party at our Hyderabad office when the pandemic hit India. For an innocent moment, we all thought it was going to last a few weeks. Weeks turned to months as I completely resettled back in my hometown in Alappuzha, and I must say, the packed bags came in handy.

For so many people, Kerala is this precious little oyster of a land that makes you think of idlis and houseboat parties. But for me, Kerala is much more – home, everlasting rain, selfless love, vintage memories stored in a bottle – but more than everything else, a place to stay for a few months and get out of,

before neighbours get too pesky about your personal life. It was thus, with a heavier-than-an-elephant heart, that I settled into this 'new normal'.

One thing Kerala does give is a whole lot of peace and calm to be with your thoughts, which I will attempt to pen down here. It is beyond my imagination to go into the details of how the pandemic impacted each one of us. But what I can curate is the major adulting takeaways of things learned and unlearned during this transition from student life to an employee, notes on what to do and not to do, applicable whether stuck at work-from-home or not.

To-do #1: Finding purpose

As cliche as it may sound, all those Bollywood characters roaming around crowded streets looking for a purpose in life have never been more relatable. Throughout our student life, we have specific goals and targets to work towards - be it an exam, a contest, a dream job, or even the next Marvel movie release (just kidding, that doesn't count). Once you cross the threshold of final year, after convincing everyone that your thesis makes sense, there is no predefined goal to work towards. No one tells you whether you need yet another job/role switch or to put your heart and soul in for a promotion. There is no end in sight 5 years down the lane which would make you feel accomplished. You

create your own goals, or as we say in the corporate world, our career/life development plan - one of the most daunting tasks one could embark upon.

Finding your purpose needs introspection, taking feedback from others while filtering in only what matters to you, and extensive existential questioning. And this hurdle, unfortunately, can't be solved by leetcoding. What can help instead brings me to the first Not-to-do.

Not-to-do #1: For the sake of geekiness

College life was a race to prove who could be the better nerd. As famously said, we are the average of the five people we spend most of our time with, and if we aren't yet, we try hard to be more like them - the bane of trying to conform and belong. While adapting to our circumstances could be a great thing to learn, aren't there things we do just for the sake of geekiness? To understand this, we merely need to think about how many of us started competitive coding even if it wasn't necessary to do well in academics or find a job. FOMO pushes us to extreme lengths, and the time we spend doing things others enjoy is time lost exploring our passions.

This does not mean switching from web development to app development or abandoning a career in engineering to become an artist (more power to you



if you actually do that). What I mean is thinking outside of the set pattern of life you are expected to follow and keeping aside time to identify what is most precious and unique to you. You might realise you want to hold music close, or that you find happiness in helping those less fortunate than you, or you have a deep interest in shaping public policy.

I do not believe in the one-true-passion philosophy. Nobel laureate physicist Richard Feynman pursued a brief stint with molecular biology and played the bongos - even in a marching band - but that didn't make him any less of a physicist. One could be multiple things, and pursuing them or acknowledging them does not take you away from your career goals. As we enter the adulting phase, we keep interacting more and more with similar people. Everyone working in a large tech MNC will be passionate about tech. Several of them might enjoy playing Call of Duty or rereading Harry Potter. In this sea of almost-clone humans, anything that makes you stand out is leverage. Such pursuits make you unique, your thoughts diverse, and most importantly, they give you more material to work with when you set out to find your purpose.

To-do #2: 'This might be a stupid question, but....'

Ask it! The worst thing one can do is keep questions in their head

but never get them answered out of fear of sounding stupid. Again, alluding to the previous step, one fact that can help is accepting that people around you would have things they don't know, no matter how smart they are. So it's equally acceptable that there are things you would need help with to understand. And often, the easiest way to get the answer is by asking out loud and being honest with yourself. The fear of sounding dumb or like a noob is not worth leaving your most pressing questions unanswered. In fact, if others around were holding themselves back for the same reasons, they would appreciate you for daring to ask the supposedly dumb question out loud. We are at a particular advantage as college grads in the workplace when it comes to asking silly questions. From managing your salary to handling complex problems, we are expected to know the least and ask the most questions. There is no better time to leverage this opportunity.

Not-to-do #2: Log kya sochenge, a.k.a. What will people think?

One of the significant hurdles that stop us from non-conformant ambitions is the persistent nagging of 'log kya sochenge' in our heads. When I enrolled for a master's in English Literature after IIITM, out of sheer curiosity and interest, a frequent response I got was 'but why?',

'will that help your career?', 'how much more do you want to study?'. Investing only in things that have an evident ROI is a materialistic way to approach life. If it brings you happiness, increases your perspectives, and helps you find more dimensions to your purpose, why shouldn't you do it?

This is applicable for both artistic & non-artistic pursuits. Although this is again something we all theoretically know, the lockdown has pushed us away from the 'people' in 'what will people think?'. And although we miss human connections, the lack of fear of judgment has allowed me to work on the craziest and moon-shot ideas I had, which made me realise how much I restrained myself due to 'what will people say?'. Once we accept that our decisions are not to be controlled by people's perceptions of what is ideal, there is a lot of control to be gained over our own lives, and we finally get to be in the driver's seat.

To-do #3: Meeting the right people

This is not a matter of chance. Almost all students graduating from our institute would be in a position to meet wonderfully accomplished and ambitious people, but not all will do it. Your credentials will help you get a foot in the door, but it is up to you to enter the room. Networking is a cliched term but making valuable connections and

interacting with people, not just similar to you but from varied backgrounds, contributes a lot to *To-do #1*. People are more than willing to talk about their work, only if someone bothers to ask. Take the effort to set up a conversation and discuss ideas, vision, and routine work. But remember to keep your coupons close and not drive them away with relentless questions. Do the necessary background research on what common ground you can meet the person in and take the conversation from there. I call this networking with intent. And never let *Not-to-do #2* hold you back. Honestly, if they don't respond to your request, they probably won't remember you later to think about you. There is no embarrassment in a cold call left cold.

Not-to-do #3: Conquering the world, only in your head

India is minting unicorns, but we all know friends who say, "I had the same idea but didn't get a

chance to implement it". The simple takeaway is that it doesn't matter if you had the idea until and unless you do something with it. Even if made on paper, all successful battle plans involve tangible steps taken in the direction of victory.

These steps need not be a massive upheaval from your daily life. The 1% better everyday concept is common knowledge. But what I have realised is it is not even necessary to do it everyday. You might be exhausted and wouldn't want to work on your moonshot goals every single day. And that's alright as long as it is somewhere in the back of your mind, and once in every blue moon, you take it out from the depth and polish it and do a little bit to take that thought further. I would like to have my own published novels someday sitting on the bestseller shelf. But today, I don't think about the novel or about the shelf. I write the most mundane things and put them down

consistently to grow as a writer. And the process itself is gratifying.

The most important of all To-dos and Not-to-dos is taking it easy and working at your own pace. Changes are hard, and adulting is harder. These are general directions I have found helpful to think about when figuring out post-college life and to recenter myself whenever I feel lost (and that is very often), even during a pandemic. Some of them, like asking stupid questions and reaching out to people, could be practised every day, and some of them, like finding purpose, might need constant updating. Nevertheless, it is an exciting journey and each day does, indeed, make you stronger. ♣♦

Haritha Sreedharan Nair is working as a Software Engineer at Microsoft and parallelly pursuing her master's in English Literature.



Kartik Singh
BCS-2020

ऐ कबीरा
मान जा

हाँ मान जा एक जिन्दगी में तू सब
कुछ देख पाएगा नहीं,
कभी कभी हारना भी अच्छा है जिन्दगी
की हर दौड़ में तू जीत पायेगा नहीं,
हाँ जानता हूँ कल की फिक्र कहीं ना
कहीं तुझे आज मुस्कुराने से रोकती है,

वो होगी या नहीं इन बातों से वो
दुनिया जहा तुझे आज टोकती है,
पर मेरी मान तू मंजिल के बिना सोचे
कुछ वक्त के लिए ठहर जा और वक्त
को बीत जाने दे,
और इस पल की खुशियों को समेट
कर अपनी बाँहों में हार के भी खुद
को जीत जाने दे।



WEAKEST POINT IN CYBERSECURITY: HUMAN ELEMENT

A new cybersecurity breach that compromised the records of conspicuous Twitter clients was the consequence of phone phishing, which features an alarming new issue for security managers. Their greatest dangers for their company are usually their employees. The human component in cybersecurity is less regarding the conscious criminal activities of insiders than blameless slip-ups made by individuals who neglect to apply basic controls like restricting authorizations on cloud datasets or who succumb to apparently genuine messages that fool them into tapping on malicious links.

The Statistics - Verizon's 2020 data breach report positioned mis-delivery and misconfiguration - unintentional openings of information brought about by human blunder - as the 3rd and 4th most common reasons for break-ins in 2020, separately, up from 6th and 8th spots in 2015. In cybersecurity, the human factor has always been the most significant reason behind most data breaches. Last year's gigantic burglary of 100 million records held by Capital One was caused by a misconfigured firewall. Furthermore, as indicated by Gartner, "through 2025, close to 100% of cloud security disappointments will be the client's shortcoming."

What should be possible? - The

least complex methodology is to instruct end-clients about the human component in cybersecurity. At work, representatives should know about the dangers of tapping on links in messages or emails. In a recent survey by Verizon, it was found that email was the delivery instrument in 94% of malware attacks in 2019. Virtually all experiences of the staggering new type of malware called ransomware are set off by phishing links.

Reproduced Attacks - However, organisations can go past schooling. By occasionally leading reproduced phishing attacks, they can pinpoint the weakest clients and single them out for training. Consider setting up a committed interior email record and encourage clients to advance dubious messages to be checked before moving upon them.

Misconfiguration - Associations have excitedly accepted cloud platforms to give clients more power over their configuring needs. However, many have not provided adequate preparation about the common obligation model that is normal to most cloud stage suppliers. That standard expresses that the cloud deals with getting the foundation, yet clients are answerable for obtaining access, applications, stockpiling, and working with operating software stack. Enterprise Management Associates

detailed last year that 53% of IT cloud framework suppliers are responsible for most or all open cloud security. It's most likely correct that awareness is even lower in the client's local area.

Visibility - IT associations can likewise work intimately with their cloud suppliers to further understand what users do with their accounts. The Enterprise Management Associates survey similarly found 73% of big business security groups said the absence of visibility inside cloud platforms restricts their adequacy. While cloud suppliers strive to resolve the issue, clients can apply pressure to guarantee that the controls expected to secure data are clear and straightforward to utilize. IT associations can likewise take the step of carrying out multifaceted confirmation on cloud accounts so valuable information isn't secured by an effectively speculated secret word.

Putting Resources - Associations should have an incident reaction plan set up so IT administrators and security experts can rapidly carry assets to mitigate an attack once it starts. Moreover, consider looking further into digital danger by observing administrations and how they can discover and cover the most significant holes in an organization's security, including its workers. ☕



AN ODE TO THE GIRLS HOSTEL ROOMS: A LEGACY AND MYSTERY FOR JUNIORS

Himanshi Kalra
IMG - 2017



Hello, my name is Himanshi Kalra, and at the time of writing this, I am a 5th-year student and lived in room number 357. My room number is easy to remember; it is the first three odd prime numbers. Every room had a feeling with it, and I penned those down.

Room 356 was the safest room of all - it had a cosy, warm feeling. I loved spending my time there. I remember it as having warm colours, bright maroon curtains, and something to munch on lying on the bed. And don't forget the big black auto-lock, it was the first I had ever seen. Room 344 had a good arrangement. I loved that the table was in a corner near the window, a separate peaceful workspace. I went there to fix some IP/subnet stuff. Room 354 was the comfiest room of all, had a homely and comfortable feeling to it (I bet it was the mattress). It was warm in winters and cool in summers - I don't know how it was done! Room 360 was the prettiest and neatest room. Things were always in place, and the room was regularly cleaned. And it was spacious and could accommodate everyone and was well-lit for studying (So much so that the roomie wouldn't turn the light on even in the evening). Almost everyone would have visited that room once.

Room 355 had a corner just at the entrance. I always thought that was handy. The roomie would

place her camera there on selfie mode and use it to tie her hair and do her makeup (later, there were mirrors installed!). Room 345 was neat and compact. The roomie would keep her clothes inside a travel bag! She finally did take them out and placed them in the wardrobe. Room 346 was neat and organized. It was easy to find things and welcoming and had good vibes overall. I had visited the three-digit version of the room less often but have more memories of the two-digit version. My mom would use it as an example for the coming years. I think I never had the chance to go inside 349. I always met the roomie outside at the door. Oh, and do mind the bucket outside; you might bump into it if you are careless! I am glad 358 was occupied - it is always good to have neighbours. Room 353 was adjacent to 354, and Room 352 was full of objects. It had books and new stuff, and all the space was wisely utilized. The walls had nails on them to hang things. Room 361 had good lighting and opened windows. Room 362 was the corner-most room. Room 370 needed a four-digit pin to unlock. I think the walls had some creative stuff on them. 348 was always buzzing with music. I think I have entered it only once, and it was full of unbelievable things.

You could easily swap 368 and 369. I think they made it

intentionally confusing! The roomie lived in multiple rooms, 350, 351 and 3XX (the one on the way to the watercooler). I have been to all of them. The room is minimal and mostly clean. I think I have visited Room 365 exactly once. I met most of the roomies in the common washrooms of the nearby numbers. 365's roomie has the most fragrant shampoo. I literally asked who was bathing next door! Room 363 was at the start of the hallway. The roomie finished Naruto before me.

I dropped off the roomie of 342 a couple of times after breakfast. It was conveniently at the start of the hallway. Room 364 was always locked without a lock! We mostly met in 360.

So how was room 357, you ask? It was a complete mess! People came from far and wide to have a look and left happily, feeling better about theirs. I didn't get it painted because I didn't have a favourite colour, so it was white by default after the whitewash. I had put posters on the walls, not because I liked them, but more so that my clothes wouldn't get white dust from them when I used the wall as a support.

Note: The word "roomie" has been used as a noun to refer to a person who lives in a room. The people were kind enough to share their room numbers with me. A few people didn't remember their room numbers at all! ☺☺



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF WRITING

I write code almost every day; I am sure many of you do, as well. The history bug in me often ponders, how long have we come? Just a few millennia ago, people did not even know how to jot anything down. And today, I am typing this on my laptop, without even a pen or paper. All of us are familiar with the English Alphabet and the origins of computers and their different languages. But what existed before it? How did we arrive from caveman drawings to the alphabet? If the thought intrigues you as much as me, let me shed some light on "some" of the theories from the combination of mythology, history & anthropology - the origins of writing.

Written language is something that seems to have always been around us. Even in our Vedic culture, a lot of our knowledge was **श्रुति**, i.e., passed by recitations from gurus to their disciples.

Why do we need a writing system at all? Won't it make learners forgetful? Won't they believe more in the external symbols than their own experiences?

The earliest records of recording information and imagination are found in ancient cave drawings, not just by homo-sapiens but our other homo-cousins as well. These symbols and paintings are called **petroglyphs** and are found not only in India but the entire world. A common issue with using drawings as a writing

method is its inability to capture context and abstract entities. How would one record, "a man who takes rest in hunting shall not be given the share of the hunt" by just picturisation? The scientific term for these drawings is **pictographs**, a "man" carrying a "spear" to hunt "two deers" is a basic drawing all of us can make. But abstract ideas like walking or resting need to be drawn using more abstract drawings, such as legs, denoting walking, or a man beneath a tree as "resting". We call them **ideographs**.

We don't know who invented the tally marks, but it's one of the most critical inventions in human history. Remember writing seven as IIII II? Instead of depicting the idea that Ram owes me 13 goats, by artistically drawing 13 goats for it, I can write it as IIII IIII III followed by the goat symbol in the tally system. They are called **logographs**. Logographs were most commonly used by Sumerians, with their wedgy-cuneiform on their clay tablets to record the ration quota. Who owes whom? When is it due? And so on.

So, simply put, pictographs can be visualised, ideographs can be imagined, but logographs can be read directly and hence are advantageous. One can probably understand, all of these require remembering thousands of different representations, one for each word. Do we really need so

many characters to write? Luckily, no.

The idea to represent similar sounding words by the same symbol is called **rebus**. So, the symbol for the Sun can be used directly for son, soon, and sown. The writing system slowly shifted from semantic to phonetic, from encoding meaning to encoding speech sounds. From a modern perspective, one can think that the phonetic script must have destroyed semantic script quickly. But as anthropology always tells us, what one thinks first is often wrong.

Let's take an example to understand all this, say, you find a piece of cloth in those ancient times, with **OO↑O** written over it. From your rebus-education, you know **O** can mean either Sun, son, sown, or soon. And **↑** means high, and **↑O** means heaven. How will you transliterate **OO↑O**? **My son sowed in the high Sun?** or **Son will soon go to heaven,** or **Soon the Sun will rise** (go to heaven)? We desperately needed the old-styled logographs back. Adding determinatives could handle this problem. So, **♡O** became son, **⊖** became Sun, and so on.

As the writer knows their intent to write a sentence - they want to write as quickly as possible - while the reader who is not as well-read, or keen, compared to the writer, can misinterpret the writing. So, it's a **tradeoff**



between making it easy for the writer v/s the reader. In our world, this is analogous to how much documentation we should do while writing code.

Writing well is all about **aesthetics**. Remember, in our childhood, they used to give us 4 line notebooks to write our alphabets. Even now, we have lined registers in school so that we write in distinguishable straight lines. We would have a hard time understanding the sequence of words if this wasn't the case. Ever thought, why are all the alphabets of 3-4 different sets of heights? Some are half; some are full; some just go below the line. Why are almost all of them the same width? What difference does it make to write and read like this? Like mathematics, it is a standard metric that helps curate and make stuff easy to read, write, duplicate and understand. Who would have thought writing could be so mathematical?

Gradually, phonetics overtook logography, as it was easier to write, and we realised the benefits of linking sounds to characters. Suddenly a few dozen symbols could encode all of the words we knew. Did we arrive at the familiar consonants and vowels yet? No, it was not that easy to crack.

Civilisations started writing sounds as characters. Let's say **ஓ(ba)** **ஓ(la)** **ଓ(ma)**, were the

symbols for their respective sounds, so it's easy to write a word like ma-ba-la as **ଓଡ଼ୋ** than to write ba-la-m, where the last sound does not have an extended "a" sound. This is done by just striking off the character, so "ma", which was **ଓ**, will get converted to "m", as **ମ**. Ba-la-m will be written as **ବାଲମ**.

Writing without vowels is a tough task. CML can very well translate to CaMeL or iCeMoLe. A smart guy in Greece figured out that we desperately need vowels to fix our alphabets and used the sounds of ah, oo, ee, etc., to use them as symbols for vowels. This technique became widespread in all of Europe and then to England, where we adopted the English writing system from.

One way is to strike off the characters; another is to write them in their base form and modify them using minor characters that give vowel-like sounds. This common technique is called **matres lectionis**. One can commonly find them as dots and dashes in **الرّشّابه** (education) in Arabic and as modifiers in **ধৃব** (*Dhruv*) or **ପଡ଼ମ** (*Padma*) in Devanagari. What an aesthetic beauty they are, only if we write them correctly.

Each writing system has its history, influences, logic and adaptation embedded in it. We can learn a lot about a culture, just from its languages. To summarise, a system using just sound

noises as their writing script is called **syllabaries**, just using consonants called **abjads**. Consonants and vowels in sequence make the system **alphabets**. And systems like Devanagari, which use modifiers as vowels, are called **alpha-syllabaries**.

Truth be told, writing took a lot of sides in its journey, and all of them are debatable.

Should it represent meanings or sounds?

Should it favour the writer or the reader?

Should it contain maximum information about every sound or just recognition?

Should it be flexible/creative or rigid/consistent?

And a lot more.

The question is, are we done? Have we achieved the best writing system possible? Obviously, the answer is no. See, no writing system, easy enough, can produce all the sounds possible in the world. English, due to the lack of symbols, is quite fundamental. Devanagari does not have the familiar click sounds found in African languages and so on. And our binary zeros and ones are capable of nothing. At least, as of now.

Ludwig Wittgenstein once said, "**The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.**" 

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TOKYO 2020

India sent a total of 121 athletes to the Tokyo Olympics, and returned with seven medals finishing 48th on the medal tally and also finished with an all-time high of 19 medals at Tokyo Paralympics 2020.



HOCKEY

After a 41-year wait, the Indian men's hockey team finally has a bronze Olympic medal since the gold at the 1980 Moscow Olympics.



BADMINTON

PV Sindhu bagged a bronze in Women's Singles followed by Krishna Nagar and Pramod Bhagat who won gold medals and Suhas Yathiraj who won a silver in Men's Singles.



ATHLETICS



Neeraj Chopra became India's second individual Olympic champion - after Abhinav Bindra - with his men's Javelin Throw gold at Tokyo 2020 while Sumit Antil also bagged the gold medal in the Paralympics Javelin Throw.

OLYMPIC HIGHLIGHTS



TOKYO 2020

WEIGHTLIFTING & WRESTLING



Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu won silver in the women's 49kg and on her Games debut, Lovlina Borgohain won a bronze medal at Tokyo 2020. In wrestling Bajrang Punia claimed the bronze medal followed by Ravi Kumar Dahiya who won a silver medal.



Why this title? Because this very polite AASF person has been chasing me for weeks to write something for Abhisar. And I simply could not find the time for it. To him, I can just say, sorry friend, I was busy! And this statement would easily be accepted, especially the latter part.

Thinking more about which, I really have been busy. My current project has been on fire in the last few weeks. There are tons of optimisations to be done and things to be learnt, and with managing cooking and gym and work and family and occasional emotional outbursts (I'm open to talking about mental health, so if you feel like it, let's connect!), it is a lot of stuff.

But you know, I did find time to watch those Harry Potter movies with my friends (I'm watching Harry Potter now for the first time, feel free to judge!). I had time to visit Oxford for a day trip, I did find time to try different Tibetan and Thai restaurants in the last few weeks. I had the time to talk to a friend for 2 hours straight. I even spent an hour cleaning my room last week (finally!). I also visited a movie theatre and cooked a really nice paneer curry.

Can I still get away with saying, I did not have time to write this article? The person who pinged me for writing this is not the only one whom I've left hanging. There are many, many more. That

book I wanted to read for a while is lying on my bookshelf, half-finished. The articles I wanted to write, the unread bookmarks in my browser. All of these are waiting on me. How long will they keep waiting? Forever. I can always do them next weekend! And this one statement is the change we need to see. The real world is chaos. There is not a hard deadline. There almost always will never be. And, there will always be more things to do. School - limited syllabus. Mostly textbooks. Read them, timely exams - you get your grades. That marks the end of a level. You get to the next class. There is a straight path, not much ambiguity.

College - things get more blurry, yet in control. Almost everything you want is around you. There are relatively clearer definitions of progress, and you have something to look forward to (internships, fests, placements). Once you get out of the campus, that's when real life starts; **Adulting**, as it is called. And things around, change. Some of us are better prepared for it and adapt better than others, and I certainly was not the best at it. A lot can be talked about here, but I'll stick to what I had in mind when I started writing this - chaos.

In my very humble experience, the graph of things which were unpredictable suddenly went up:

There were bills to be paid.
There were tickets to be solved.
There were new connections to be made.

There were calculated statements to be said.

There were new things at work to be learnt.

And there were bridges to be burnt.

In personal life, there were suddenly new directions to take,
New rules to break,
Hidden or realised, new dreams to be followed,

And new guilts to be swallowed.
To summarize, there was chaos.
A chaos that I was not prepared for.

And most of which are mentioned above, do not come with timelines.

And hence, there is always a next day. Always, a next weekend.

And yes, dreams can wait.
About two years into it, and professionally, I was doing okay.
Personally, it was a mess.
The chaos was eating me up. I did not know how to make sense of things around. Why is it that with this good job, with a decent salary to live a life more comfortable than my cousins in a village in India can even imagine, was none of this making any sense?
There was a recurring dissatisfaction, a gap I was not able to fill.
Isn't all this what I churned for, back then in college?

I'd really wish there was one stroke of insight to put here to



to weave a spicy story, but there isn't. Written below are things which came to me gradually, as I met and talked to more people, read more books, and visited more places. And like everything else, I am very aware that my experiences are my own, and am not claiming to make any generalisations here. With my very limited depth and breadth, I do not claim to say anything that hasn't been said before. But if even a few of you take something from out of this, I'll be humbled.

About time. You do not have time, you make time for what matters. If there is a fire in your room, you will leave everything and put it off. Because that's important. While most other things waiting on you are not that on fire, you get the point. So the next time you find yourself making an excuse of being busy for missing a commitment, take a moment to re-evaluate. What is the other thing you prioritized instead? What could you have done instead? (There are no right or wrong answers here. Happiness is a value too. I'm only advocating to ask these questions more often.)

Strengthen the sense of self. What do you stand for? What are your values? They are the things that matter the most to you. If you are not spending enough time and energy in living your life aligned with your values, dissatisfaction will arise.

Understanding oneself is important. The very first step to correction is realising that something needs to be corrected. That realisation comes, when you take a moment off the rush that's around, to pay more attention to your behaviours and surroundings. Understand your values, and try being more mindful of living a life circling around those. (Not sure what values are? I wasn't either. Read this - <https://personalvalu.es/>, or search for core values!)

Routine is freedom.

Quirky stuff right? Well, I didn't say it, James Clear did (<https://jamesclear.com/habit-guide>). No matter how much I tried, I couldn't continue doing stuff that mattered to me. It was not a problem with the intention or the efforts. The culprit was the chaos - internal and external. Find order in chaos, or better, make order in chaos. Not having any external accountability, and the absence of a timeline in personal life makes procrastination frictionless. It is very easy to not do things, which you are not immediately rewarded for (video games and TV shows are all curated to give us instant dopamine hits which is why these are addictive). But instant dopamine hits can only take us this far. That Coursera course which is bookmarked and never finished, re-evaluate. If you feel that you still want to do it, maybe set up some dedicated

time in the day, every day? We promote having an agile methodology at work - ever tried having a sprint board for personal life? Always prefer systems over goals.

Not sure what these words mean? Go look them up. Systems v/s goals are one of the most important distinctions to understand. Goal is aiming for that 30LPA job. System is being the kind of person and engineer who could crack that. Goals are perishable; you will reach a point and stop. Systems are there to stay; they will keep propelling you forward. Focussing on systems, goals become subsets, more like milestones. Goals will tell you which immediate turn to take. Systems will guide you through your journey.

Be really, genuinely kind. To everyone around, and especially with yourself. A little bit of compassion and empathy can go a long way. I cannot emphasize this enough. This is hard to explain, but remember this, if you will. :) There is so much more I can say, you know! I haven't conquered all of it yet, not even close. As always, making a little bit of progress, every single day.

PS: This was not for you. I was writing to my younger brother, or maybe the Shreya of 2013. ✌

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'What If?'

A frequent visitor that waves at one's most vulnerable moments. Some 'what ifs' have made you reverie while the others made a visit in the after-hours when you could no longer shut them out or pretend to be busy. The article attempts to dive into the latter kind of 'what if'.

The debt of the 'What If'?

Going Beyond LinkedIn Profiles
Your inhibitions and fears leave little to no space for a real conversation, the one which goes beyond 'What are you working on these days?' all the way up to 'What's your story, what moves you on the inside and in what ways are you a total idiot and a total superhero?'.

The smell of wet soil

When you are not where you are, you experience everything a little less intensely and therefore by extension live a little less every day. The glimmer of joy in the eyes of the little kid who just splashed in a small pool formed on the side of the road you just passed by, the lightly flying white feather that settled on your shoulder and balanced itself

perfectly, the ice cream stall you can now visit without mum's approval all go unnoticed easily and repeatedly.

I am sure they must have had a blast, missed it all

Naina's "Jitna bhi try karlo Bunny, life mein kuch na kuch toh chootega hi, toh jahan hain, wahin ka maza lete hain" against Bunny's iconic speech hints at a "galat nahi alag" way of living. The forgotten wisdom of which might be helpful on some odd days where the 'what ifs' have been acting out and playing wildly on a loop in our heads.

Plan B

While the first half of the article can be termed as a departure from the 'practical ways of thinking', this section can be treated as a close encounter with the same. You are requested to live your darkest possible reality, the one where the worst in fact does come to the worst. Your dream job, the interview to which is approaching in a week, goes as badly as it could. The person you secretly fancied finds you unbearable and can't stand the sight of you. The one truth that you believed in,

which formed your core faith, turns out to be a hoax and you can't unsee how tiny your existence is and how trivial everything you do is. Every single person in your current social group declares you a complete failure. You lose the people you love the most.

What happens now?

You cope.

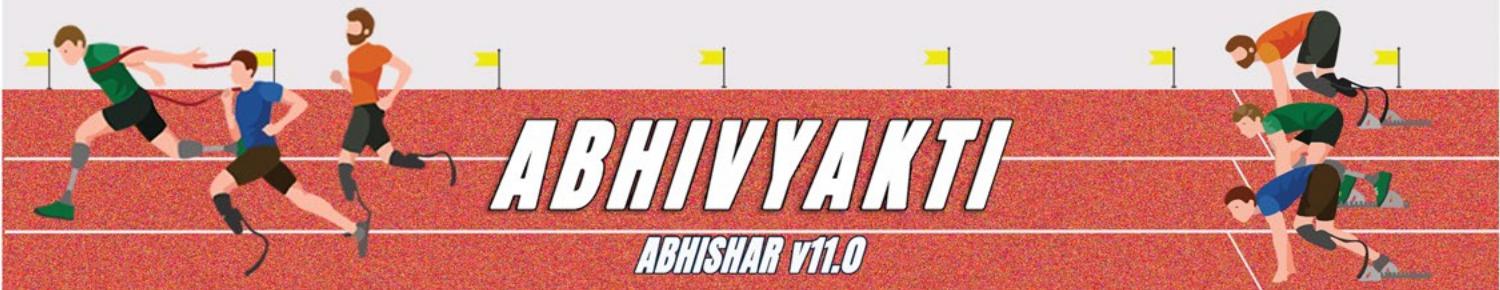
"However bad life may seem, there is always something you can do, and succeed at. While there's life, there is hope" the words of Stephen Hawking, yet another answer to a lot of many 'what-ifs'. Perhaps more often than not we have underestimated our ability to adapt and cope. Whatever happens tonight there will always be a new morning and a cup of coffee to hold while gazing at the plants outside your window.

Hope this attempt to help the reader take a pause and appreciate today a little more and thereby live a little more penetrates the right mind at the right time.

Thank You. ✋

"You'd think, 'What if I make a mistake today, I'll regret it'. I don't believe in regret, I feel everything leads us to where we are and we have to just jump forward, mean well, commit, and just see what happens."

- Angelina Jolie.





Disha Singh
IMT - 2020

THE CONUNDRUM OF HAVING NO DREAMS

24

Life often feels like an ever-transient race, with a constant competition to fend off and no end in sight, no matter what paths are chosen. All around us are people racing towards their one ultimate destination, and no stones are left unturned to succeed. Merely having the zeal and strength to do so is, in itself, a commendable quality to look up to. But what if the question we all dread becomes our reality - what if we have no such dream to live and die for?

It feels hollow within when people race past us with fires propelling their souls while we take hesitant steps on the sides, the dullness of the ashes consuming us. Continuing the journey looks pointless, but the horror of not making it to a finishing line begins to shroud our judgement. If there are no aims to drive us each day to fight and achieve, what journey do we embark on? Even worse, is this the end already?

More often than not, this rush makes us forget that others' dreams don't need to be ours too. It's natural to be confused and unsure of what paths to walk.

This is just another obstacle to overcome, yet perhaps the most intimidating, for it feels like an abrupt tangent from the track. Pausing to introspect and choosing to not continue is not wrong or lazy of us. We need to be in touch with our thoughts and wants without letting fear engulf our feelings before proceeding. However, in the rush of establishing our place in the world, we get anxious about going at our own pace to identify what goals we want to pursue since we don't want to halt while others run past us swiftly. We turn cruel to ourselves by drawing comparisons fruitlessly and coaxing ourselves into following the same dreams. But it is crucial to realise that this will only yield regret, owing to not having been true to ourselves and instead having wasted our energy to fit into boxes not meant for us. Our lives are to be dictated not by mundane rules or expectations but by what the heart desires and the mind decides.

No dreams can be termed as "big" or "small". Anything that gives us happiness and we feel is worth living for is a vision. The

ultimacy of a goal is not to be extravagant or fulfilling what society expects of us, but to be at peace with the joy its achievement gives. Even simply living life to the fullest by cherishing all little and big moments of happiness is enough. After all, running mindlessly for so long with a fixation on the destination can keep us away from appreciating the beauty of the journey itself.

Hence at times like these, when it feels that we're running without a purpose, our brains muddled with chaos, it's okay to slow down and give priority to what we want instead of what is expected of us. Taking time to ponder over what we wish to achieve in life is not a judgement we need to make too quickly. While we might appear dejected and adrift on the outside, this conceals the silent battle we fight within, meaning the war hasn't been lost yet.

Because eventually, after fighting for so long, no matter at what pace, we all reach our destinations, with rays of sunshine now adorning the gloomy skies of the hardships of the past. ☘

"Happiness is a butterfly, which when pursued, is always beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."

– Nathaniel Hawthorne

LIFESTYLE
ABHISHAR v11.0





If you're searching for another romantic love story, let me crush your thoughts straight away. This ain't any love relationship story of me being a Romeo and wiping my tears off for my hypothetical Juliet. Like every other person, did you also get confused? Well, it's not your fault, the title has been chosen deliberately to grab your attention. Instead, it's quite more than that. It's my eternal affection for my dearest Stacy. So, who is Stacy?

She 'was' my 2-month-old pup. Heh, she is still alive. Then, why 'was' has been used in the previous sentence? Also, why has the title been named 'A Relationship that never existed'?

All the answers need to be unfolded. This article is concentrated on life lessons that an innocent pet had taught until she stayed with me. Before that, I wanted to ask the reader if you would be there to discover one of my life's learning phases. If your answer is 'A BIG YES,' fill your mug of coffee, sip it and go on.

Arrival Lesson - "With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility"

"I'm super excited," I proclaimed joyfully.

"What for?" my mom replied monotonously.

"Stacy is coming home today." Being a pet lover, my happiness was at the next level. Then after an ice-breaking pause, she asked, "Stacy?".

"I'm going to call her by this name," I replied, and my mom liked the name too.

A week ago, from Stacy's arrival, I was trying to convince mom to buy me a pet. I agreed to do all the work meant for raising a pet. Fortunately, I heard the news that my sister's friend had rescued a female pup. I immediately asked my sister to call her friend and bring the pup to our home. I googled stuff related to dogs, read almost every article about pets on the internet. Everything went fine, and Stacy was going to come home.

On the first glance, I was so excited. Maybe the aura of a pet is fabulous. I took her in my lap and fondled her. My life changed from then onwards. I started waking up early as I was the one who provided her meals. If she scrubbed feces anywhere, it was my duty to clean the floor immediately to avoid germs. I made a small dog house as well and cleaned that every day. My day used to start with her and ultimately end with her. Trust me, if all this doesn't seem to be tiring work, keep a dog for some days, you will get to know.

Playing with her, seeing her smile removed all my pains. She was innocently cute. I then recalled the quote, "Remember, with great power comes great responsibility". My power was Stacy, and taking care of her was my responsibility. Her arrival

taught me the first lesson, and I didn't know many more were yet to come.

Lessons 2 - "Set Your Purpose, and you'll conquer the world"

When Stacy used to be in a mood to play, she used to start running on the whole floor, from the hall to every room and repeating the same track. In between, sometimes, I restricted her way. She then started to fight with me. The little one adjusted herself in an attacking position, bent her head down, raised her eyebrows, and made growling sounds. She was as tiny as a newborn baby but always tried to surpass me. She never gave a second thought to defeat me. She never looked terrified to fight someone giant compared to her size. She always succeeded to conquer me, as her intentions were bold.

Stacy taught me her next lesson, knowing the difference between traction and distraction is the key. It's when you do things unintentionally, you get into trouble. But if your intentions are determined, you are worthy enough. The trick to being productive is to be purposeful. When your purpose is fixed, your goal seems minute.

Lesson 3 - "Unconditional Deeds Are Always Fruitful"

My sister is not fond of pets. She always admits her fear of them. She can't even touch them without shivering, so fondling is a far cry. I have tried many times to

reduce her fear, but nothing worked out. That's the main reason the decision of bringing Stacy home didn't please her much.

Stacy was always determined to play with her squeaky rubber ball. She used to search that in the cupboard, drawer, and everywhere else where she had access. One fine day, when she didn't get it, she looked a little sad. My sister had hidden that ball to avoid the distraction made by that squeaky noise, which I was unaware of. Stacy then sat beside my mom, who was busy worshipping. At times, Stacy used to hide below the sofa. So, when my mom stood after worshipping, Stacy went to her place quietly. While my sister was busy with her work, she dropped some of her important documents behind the table, where she couldn't reach them. We were struggling to pick them up. Stacy came along and used her miniature size wisely and picked those in no time. Impressed, my sister returned the ball, and Stacy started playing again.

I was stunned that Stacy had helped a person who had hidden her stuff. Stacy unknowingly taught me what unconditional help means. If things are materialistic, let them be. Rightly said, whatever the situation is, you should play your part with total dedication, and good things will reach you on their own.

Lesson 4 - "Signs of Unhappiness Need to be Noticed"

One fine day, Stacy's body language had changed. She seemed to be lethargic. She practised escapism - as if nothing attracts - her behaviour was rude. Her energy level was diminished to half of its original. She drank less milk than her usual diet. And the worst part was she didn't communicate. Yes, animals have a unique way of communication. They do not speak yet make you understand what they want to convey.

Whenever I used to put her on a table, from where she couldn't jump to the floor due to her size, she started making low-pitched barks and asked everyone around to put her back to the ground. But this time, when I kept her on the almirah's roof, she did nothing and sat there for a long duration. My mother noticed this for the first time and asked me to take her for a walk.

In the evening, I took her on the walk. The garden, where we went, near to my home is beautiful for spending time with oneself. Being Sunday, the garden was pretty much busy. Still, Stacy found her way herself. The pup was excited about the environment. I could easily identify the drastic change she showed. She played with twigs, leapt over hurdles, and wandered around herself. The little one was at her peak enjoyment.

On the way home, she fought a

brave battle with a dog of almost double her size. When I saw a pack of dogs approaching her, I immediately moved her from that place. As soon as we reached home, she went to mom's lap and rested. This was genuine as the little kid was tired. Then onwards, Stacy became normal, ate meals like before, started making noisy barks, and showed all signs of happiness.

Although the whole incident may seem to be a usual one yet, Stacy taught me a lesson here. "Refreshing Yourself is a Necessity." Being a techie guy, I used to spend my day and night in front of a laptop, thereby feeling frustrated at times. She taught me to go for a walk, if not every day, then at least once a week. Rightly said, we should take wandering outdoor walks so that the mind might be nourished and refreshed by the open air and deep breathing.

The Final Lesson - "Never Get Too Attached"

So, let's come to the question we had started with. Why did this relationship never exist?

My parents asked me to hand Stacy over to her original owners. I was bent out of shape by the fact that Stacy is going away from me. I tried convincing them again, but efforts were in vain. Finally, the day had come when Shraddha Di, my sister's friend, was going to come to take Stacy away from me. I was reduced to tears. My heart was broken,

feelings were on the verge of an explosion, and my face was like a wet weekend. I could think of nothing but to grab Stacy and hold her forever. Since morning I was keeping an eye on her as if I wanted to notice every single bit of her, capture her little actions. I was determined to save her in the ROM of my brain cells so that she couldn't escape once she entered.

"Oh god, why mom, why?" were my words to mom, explaining how severe my pain was to let her go away. My mom smiled and handed over Stacy in my hands. Stacy was also calm by that time, maybe because she played

enough for the day. She sat on my lap straight for an hour. It felt like the clock hands were ticking as fast as they could, and the time arrived. It was 5 PM when Shradhha Di came and asked for Stacy. The animal who was quiet for an hour jumped joyously from my lap and went to her as soon as she saw her. I was a bit surprised and got taken aback. The little creature who was with me for a week pretended like I was no one to her. Maybe yes, I was nothing to her from that moment. They stayed for half an hour and then went away. Stacy was happy and playing with her squeaky ball. I with my family also went to

attend our family function. Everyone was normal, but not me. One thought was constantly troubling me. "How can someone be so feeling-less? Is it because she is an animal, or she wasn't attached to me?". Then, I realized and learned Stacy's last lesson for life, "Never Get Too Attached To Anyone." All the world's a stage, and we are merely players, rightly said by Shakespeare.

This way, the relationship between Stacy and me is eternal but never existed. I believe having a pet is the best feeling in this world. What's your call? ♡♡



Lakshay Parashar
IMG-2020

Rejuvenation



Looking down in your gloomy eyes, all I see is a spasm that you hide.

From the bloom of spring to the breeze of winter
Pain that you bear, tears that you swallowed

Everything slammed you here.

You don't want to forget but also not want to recall how darkness faded your love.
All you see is, the wall of misery hides pain, keeping happiness away.
Your eyes are revealing the deceit of your face.

Life accuses you of accepting the truth

It charges you your love, filled you with your loneliness
sober nights will fall, the sun will rise

Clear thoughts take away past sufferings

It's me from infinity. Hold my hand

Remember all red moon nights, silver stars drowning off the sea
get out of a dream, face the future

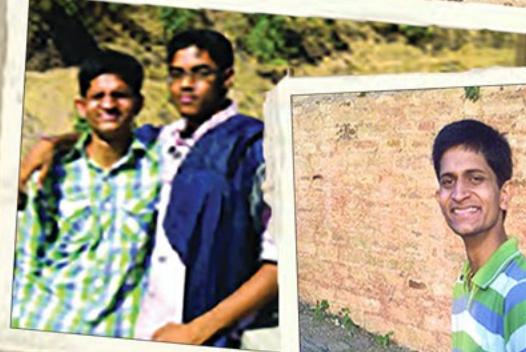
accept the love that you deserve, and let me live in your memories.



MEMORIES

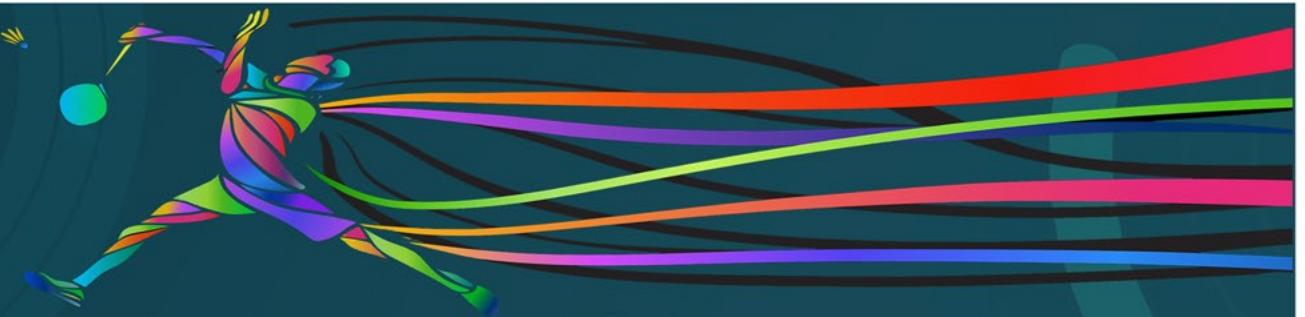
We meet a lot of people in our lives, but only some manage to remain in our memories forever.

Late Tushar Sharma and Late Abhinav Saxena were among the most diligent members of AASF.



Their friendly demeanor with their dedication and hardwork made them special. It has been 11 years since their unfortunate demise, but they are still alive in our Memories.

PHOTOGRAPHY



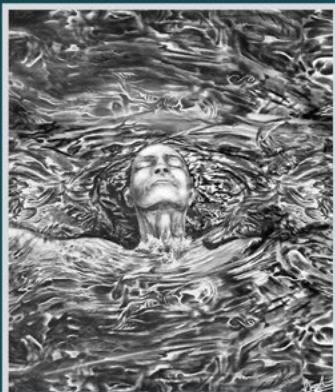
ANIL KUMAR

क्या रखा है भीड़ भाड़ में, कुछ दिन तो गुज़ारो पहाड़ों में



HARSHVARDHAN SINGH TOMAR

The nature gives you signs, you just have to stay patient and keep following the trails



SAHIL GANGURDE

Take me back to peaceful life



VED RATAN

Just look up, we're both under the starry sky





SHUBHAJEET PRADHAN

Player of Golden Throw.
Neeraj Chopra (Gold Medalist, Tokyo Olympic'20)

SHASHWAT AGRAWAL

The Fibonacci Sequence turns out to be the key to understanding how nature designs



MAYANK SINGH

Butterflies are the nature's angels. They remind us what a gift it is to be alive

MRINAL DEVNATH

Virushka - Conquering the hearts of many



A JOG DOWN THE SPORTS LANE!

Concentration
Teamwork
Speed liteness
Energy sportsmanship
Agility Resilience Will FOCUS Skill Consistency
Vision Strength Camaraderie
Winner Power
Stamina Motivation





Tannu Baghel
IMT - 2020

FUMES TO FLAMES

32

I am writing this to share a journey that started 2.5 years ago to not feel low anymore. I have always been an overweight child. Being the chubby kid in the family has its perks - everyone pampers you, and you are everyone's favourite. But when it turns into obesity while growing up, it doesn't feel cute anymore. You still look cute, but now you start feeling different. I spent the whole of my school life being overweight. Getting bullied in school by classmates was a constant and painful part of my childhood. One would think I should have become numb to it, but that wasn't the case. I still broke down the same way every single time I was bullied. Being a person with a different body type than others isn't easy. People stare at you wherever you go, putting all their effort to make you feel like an alien (although maa said they stare because I look cute, I could see the real reason). Unknown people bully you directly, but people you know have much more creative and indirect ways to bully you. I still remember an incident from school - our teacher came into the class and announced the topic to be studied that day, looking directly at me. It was the molecular orbital theory, or "MOT". It was a good joke, and ironically I was the first to laugh to appreciate its creativity. I spent my school life being too harsh

on myself, struggling to hide the feelings and bottling up emotional breakdowns. But this is what I was taught - to be "emotionally strong", or at least to pretend to be strong. The day I always feared the most in my entire school life was the day before the final exams when the whole class was taken to weigh themselves. The mere thought of weighing myself always gave me goosebumps and anxiety throughout my school life. I'm not exaggerating, but the fact was that I always weighed at least 20 kgs more than the average weight of the whole class. Apart from this, I started having many health problems like thyroid imbalances, an irregular menstrual cycle and many more such issues.

So, when did I start? Here starts the journey after passing high school. On the day I faced the fear of standing on the weighing machine, the weight crossed a 100; it was 105 kgs! I felt like crying, and I felt broken. I resolved to lose weight by hook or by crook. Soon after the exams, I joined a gym and lost 15 kgs in about three months. You might think that's impressive - though the fact is it is easier to shed weight when you are too heavy. I didn't make changes in my diet, and then I gained weight again because it is almost impossible to stick to a diet in a typical Indian family. I somehow started

feeling "okay" with the present weight. But here comes the turning point in my journey with the lockdown, gyms were closed!

The fear of gaining back those 15 kgs pushed me to discover a new path. After a quick search on the internet about various workouts, diets, and fitness regimes, I promised myself a healthy lifestyle without the intention of losing weight. I started with some YouTube videos and some apps for workouts. Gradually, I did workouts according to my interests and tried being more physically active wherever I could, like running up the stairs or playing a sport instead of binge-watching series and movies.

I made some changes in my diet by adding more veggies and whole-grain foods and kept an approximate track of my calorie intake. People started noticing the difference, although I couldn't because that wasn't my motive. After around four months, I visited the gym and stood on the weighing machine - and for the first time, what I saw on the machine - made me smile. I had lost 17 kgs during the lockdown.

After this, I never needed any external motivation - because the workouts and diet was a part of my lifestyle. My definition of fitness changed. I don't even weigh myself regularly now. Even though I discovered this late,



LIFESTYLE
ABHISHAR v11.0

I realised that fitness is about feeling love for the body type you are in and feeling stronger each day. "Love yourself the way you are and be proud of it." It is easy to say it but harder to accept it. I like reading it as - "Love yourself the way you are and be proud about working hard to make yourself a better and a stronger version of your previous self." Contrary to popular belief, fitness isn't about looking pretty or skinny - fitness is the strength that makes you feel good. Diet and workouts are just the nourishments your body requires regularly. Dieting doesn't mean starving for hours and ending up binging. Rather, it includes

healthy and mindful eating habits that you can imbibe into your entire life. Don't forget to include some cheat days whenever your body craves it!

I'll end this article by answering a few of the questions below that I am generally asked:

- How many kilos have I lost so far?

I've lost around 36-37 kgs - I don't keep a record anymore.

- Did I take fat loss supplements?

Yes, I did when I was in class 10th and faced low blood pressure and severe health issues because of it. So, I cut it out of my fitness journey.

- Do I exercise during my

period days?

Yes, I do. I enjoy it the most since high levels of endorphins are released these days. I have never felt cramps in the past two years, and exercising has also helped me deal with emotional imbalances.

- What was the most challenging part of my journey?

The days you see no results even after being consistent and working harder. But these are the days that count! The days that I felt low, I still kept going.

In conclusion, I have a final piece of advice - Keep loving the stronger you. That is all that matters. ☘️



Aman Vaishya
IMG-2020

अब बस!

बहुत हुआ, अब
कुछ करके दिखाना है



अब बस! बहुत हुआ, अब कुछ करके
दिखाना है ॥

अपनी मंजिल पाने के लिए बहुत पसीना
बहाना है,
माना रास्ते में मुसीबतें आएंगी बहुत,
पर चाय की तरह मलाई हटा के पी
जाना है ॥

अब बस! बहुत हुआ, अब कुछ कर के
दिखाना है ॥

थोड़ी सी पतंग की डोर ढीली क्या कर
दी मैंने,
लोग तो मेरे पतंग के पीछे ही पड़ गए,
पर बेचारे उन्हें क्या पता ये चालाकी
थी मेरी,
रास्ते से उन्हें हटाकर, अब आसमान में
उड़ जाना है ।।

अब बस! बहुत हुआ, अब कुछ कर के
दिखाना है ॥

थक चुका हूँ मैं कुछ लोगों के ताने
सुनकर,

पर कुछ भी हो उन्होंने मेरे अंदर एक
अलख जगा दी है
माना सफलता की राह पर हार का
सामना करना पड़ता है,
उन सभी को धन्यवाद जिन्होंने मुझे मेरी
औकात दिखा दी है ॥

अब कुछ भी हो बिना सफल हुए रुक
नहीं जाना है,

अब कुछ भी हो मां—बाप को गर्व महसूस
कराना है,
अब बस! बहुत हुआ, अब कुछ कर के
दिखाना है ॥



Ankit Dhiman
IMG - 2020

UNLOCKING THE POT OF GOLD

34

In 2021 alone, India added around 28 more startups to its list of Unicorns taking its tally to a total of 65. Isn't it fascinating! Indeed it is. But what's more intriguing is that some of these startups managed to do this with minimal to zero spending on marketing and without any funding. But how were they able to pull it off?

The answer to this question lies in Kunal Shah's Delta-4 Theory. But what is this Delta-4 Theory? Consider two states, let's say, ordering food online and ordering food on call. With the online apps, ordering food is just a matter of a few clicks. If someone ever orders food online for the first time, it is highly unlikely that they will ever go back to the older ways. The same is the case while booking train tickets online v/s offline or finding a cab online v/s offline. Let's say, on a scale of 10, the newer method gets an efficiency score of x, and the older method gets y. Then the difference (delta) of their efficiencies will be $x-y$. If we repeat this exercise over the products across any industry, we can see that the products that lead the market and become successful have a delta of greater than or equal to 4 in their efficiency

scores. These products then become a verb, for example, '*Exam me questions google karlunga*' or '*Bhai assignment whatsapp karde*'.

According to Kunal Shah, these products with a delta greater than 4 are the ones that create wealth or, in other words, '*unlock the pot of gold*', but if the delta is less than 4, they will destroy wealth. But how and why does this Delta-4 work? If you think about it, there are tons of systems in the world having tons of inefficiency. If someone can come up with a product that can remove or at least decrease these inefficiencies to a great extent, they will be able to achieve $\Delta > 4$.

A product with Delta-4 has three traits. First, it creates an irreversible change in the users. Once we have experienced a state with high efficiency, it is nearly impossible to shift back to a state of lower efficiency, like ordering food online or using UPI instead of cards or other traditional ways of transferring money.

The second is Unique Brag worthy Proposition, i.e. UBP. Somebody who has experienced a high efficient state will go on bragging about it. They'll want the entire humanity to shift to this increased efficiency state. For

example, I am pretty sure that no one of us is using WhatsApp because we saw its advertisement somewhere. We use it because someone from our family or friends came and told us, '*Hey, there is this amazing app called WhatsApp. It lets you send messages and make calls for free*', and you just started using it. Isn't it so?

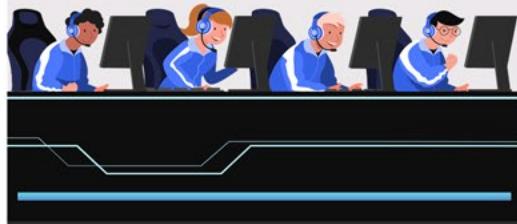
Third, the users grow a high tolerance towards the product. For example, despite the privacy policy changes of WhatsApp, we are still using it, and even if it goes down, the users wait for it to come back online instead of switching to some other messaging app permanently.

If we observe further, founders of all the startups that have been successful in the long run identified the inefficiencies in the current states, tried to remove them and unlocked their pots of gold. The theory also explains why 90% of the startups fail to make it in the long run, with around 10% failing in their first year.

There are thousands of opportunities in the form of inefficiencies and hurdles all around us. All we need to do to claim our pot of gold is to identify these inefficiencies and remove them. ☘️

"For every disciplined effort there is a multiple reward."

– Jim Rohn





This article won't be highly informative but rather a casual approach to compiling my college life - just an attempt to educate my past self and a note to my juniors.

School mostly has a standard syllabus divided over the years with teachers guiding us. It's an entirely different world out here where there are endless possibilities. It's like starting life from a clean slate and building the personality you want to be in the coming years. It's quite challenging to find direction in this uncharted phase of life, and thus comes the hustle to establish yourself and find an identity among hundreds of your peers.

Overjoyed by the awe and beauty of the IIITM campus upon arrival, exploring the huge infrastructure, classes, and meeting talented batchmates, there's a sudden upgrade from school, living away from your family in this new world of engineering and hostel life.

One of the best things which happened to me was the DSLR. Let me elaborate on how this single object changed my entire college life. In simple words, I clicked some good photos, and they got noticed by some good seniors and clubs, which eventually resulted in getting a chat with them and getting selected in one of the clubs. Apart from social recognition, I got an insight into the engineer-

ing/post-placement life & career of these immensely multi-talented seniors, which inspired me to build something similar for myself. This got me started to build a social and technical portfolio for myself, and voila, here I am 4 years later, writing an article about it, listing down my mistakes and guiding the coming juniors - and people thought the DSLR was just for showing off. Well, of course, there's always a flip side - you get called to all the social gatherings and college events and have to be a wedding photographer for free.

Learnings & Mistakes:

- There is no need to be overly friendly. Acquaint yourself with everyone, and take your time to analyse the people who best suit you, value you, and make you grow every day.
- Kill the school habit of competing and getting marks, judging based on CGPA or being too much into books. College is also about collaborating and growing together and experiencing and gaining some real-life soft skills, which will certainly pay off in the future.
- Never be obsessed with placements from the very beginning. While it is good to have direction, making every decision for the sake of placements will leave you with a lot of regrets later on. It's okay to sketch, click photographs, participate in events, and hold executive positions in col-

lege fests. Involving yourself in these things is definitely not a waste of time. In the end, you don't want to be the guy who is placed in an excellent company but has zero college memories.

- Last but not least, it's okay to be clueless in your initial years. Scarcity or overload of information are both deadly. Attend the events around you, spend time exploring all the fields, and then choose what's best for you. There is no need to pursue a field and try to excel in it just because some YouTube influencer or college senior told you it was the hottest buzzword in the industry. I have seen people wasting their time pursuing trends and eventually giving up on them due to self-doubt.

This pretty much sums up my first year, filled with friends, an obsession for getting good marks, coding, seniors, college fests and loads of advice, and a rough roadmap for coming years. I made many memories, clicked thousands of pictures, learned some non-tech skills, and earned some money out of competitions.

Second-year is a low profile year. You attend lesser events, are lesser seen on the campus and spend more time learning, coding, or polishing your CV. A few notable changes, though. Batchmates have stopped comparing their CGPA and now are focussing on developing skills like CP, Blockchain, Machine



Learning, Android, and N-Stack development (apart from binging on Netflix, of course).

It may feel very overwhelming at first - even I have tried almost most of these things out of FOMO. But the way forward is sticking to one thing and mastering it. Now it's more like stalking LinkedIn profiles and companies instead of Instagram and Facebook.

With people reminding you this is the most crucial year, seeing success stories all around you and some seniors heading off to Goa with those bulky internship stipends/packages, you may start feeling the pangs of self-doubt. Believe me, the struggle is real, but sharing it with friends makes it a sweet memory.

Often while chatting with juniors, I've heard the common words - "Sir aapki life to set ab". It reminds me of when I was in the same shoes back then and repeating the exact same words to my seniors, and this realisation just brings a smile to my face.

All along the way, we grow up, and growing in life is about getting the freedom to choose your problems. They never disappear, but you get comfortable choosing and solving them. That is what makes you an engineer, finding comfort in the discomfort. That is what those JEE preparation days, overnight studies for CGPA, and college placement days prepare us for.

Learnings & Mistakes:

- Comparison is deadly - it halts your progress and influences you to follow in someone else's footsteps with no guarantee of success. It's better to be inspired by someone and learn their tips and tricks rather than to whine about your luck and stop trying. Things may come later in life.

- Trying to learn everything at the same time, just because you 'wasted' your first year doesn't mean you pick up everything at the same time. This leads to frustration and nothing else. This is where a senior's advice comes to play, to get a clear roadmap and step-by-step guidance for learning something rather than having an ego and trying to do it all on your own.

- Don't hesitate while asking doubts or gaining knowledge from seniors or even from juniors. One of the things I later realised in college is that being a senior is not only about giving advice and 'bragging' but also about learning from your juniors. In this fast-changing world, there are loads of things you may be missing out on. In fact, one of the best things which happened was coming across some fellow juniors who shared the same enthusiasm. We eventually ended up building multiple projects, participating in hackathons, tech discussions, and whatnot. It doesn't feel like a senior-junior relation anymore. To this date, I mentor and get mentored by juniors in several domains of life.

And this takes us to the next phase - the final/pre-final year of college, which is a taste of the real bittersweet world, where rejections are real, and you're on the verge of the next chapter of life. Your CV is up there, shining with social achievements, some minor internships, and college projects. Discussions are filled with company openings, package comparison over chai and samosa, and endless LinkedIn scrolling. Companies have already started visiting the campus, and you get news every day. Checking emails and nudging PRs for the Next Big Company is the new routine.

Then you get the first person from the batch who bags an internship/placement, then the second, and then the third. The walls are closing in on you now, and you don't want to be left behind. There is silence in the lobbies now; the cricket grounds are empty, and everybody is busy preparing for the next interview, some of them working for their last chance. There is an eerie emotion on the faces and darkness in the hallways. I feel fortunate I didn't have to face this torture and this immense pressure - I wouldn't have survived it. But I did see my friends closely, and I am in awe of how much courage it takes to accept rejections to try again and again till you succeed. It all passes like a nightmare, which crescendos in smiling and happy faces.



At the end of all this, you do deserve a treat, hanging out with friends, sipping on coffee with an image of a secure future. There's nothing more peaceful and exciting than this - the next chapter of life, full of possibilities and endless hope. And then it hits you like a truck - the last four years of college rushed past you in a blink, forgetting your passion, hustling and building your life, and falling down and learning to pick yourself back up yet again.

Learnings & Mistakes:

- After placement, try to get into other domains. Pick up the hobby you left long ago, meet your friends, spend some time away from the hustle, and relax in peace, go on a trek, travel solo, or just catch up with school friends, for you need all the energy before this next chapter of life.

- Be humble and respectful. There's no need to fall into the vicious cycle of comparing job roles, packages, and company policies now. It's time to grow up, make some money, and be financially independent.

- Learn the difference between CTC and in-hand salary :P. The difference is quite drastic and can come as a shock to a lot of people. Also, an insight into money management, finance, and the tax system will save a lot of money and give you financial freedom once you start earning.
- The last one is to gift your loved ones with your first stipend/salary; it's a whole new feeling. That expression of pride and happiness is priceless, which no money can buy. Contribute your own share in the house expenses, and most importantly,

start to learn cooking. Once again, you'll be in a new territory. It's always good to face these challenges away from home with a tummy full of self-cooked meals.

Call it a reflection of real-life but college indeed holds some of the greatest life lessons for us, and these cannot be learnt through a podcast or listening to someone's advice. You gain from it only if you experience it. All we can do is prepare ourselves with a strong heart, some good friends, and a DSLR to capture the essence of it. It doesn't take much to live through Engineering, does it? ☺

Prajwal Singh is working as a Product Engineer at Gojek (Driver Platform).

Did you Know?



1975

India won World Cup Hockey, Malaysia

In this historical victory against Pakistan on 15th March 1975, India won the Hockey World Cup held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with a score of 2-1. Players like Ajit Pal, who was the captain of the team, and Aslam Sher Khan played a crucial role in this victory. India has 8 Olympic Gold Medals under its name which is a great achievement in itself. When it comes to Hockey, the contribution of Dhyanchand cannot be skipped.

"The Wizard" led the Indian Hockey team to victory several times including the 1936 Berlin Olympics victory over Germany which was witnessed by over 40,000 people including Hitler. Hitler got so furious with the match result that he left the stadium in frustration and anger. Legend has it that the next day, he invited Dhyanchand to meet him and offered him German citizenship along with a high post in the German army, which Dhyanchand politely refused.



IIITM STREET
ABHISHAR v11.0





INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: A SCAPEGOAT OF UNNEEDED CRITICISM?

How many times have we come across this line, "Arrey State Board schools me kuch nahi rakha bas ratta marna hota hai" or this line "State Board me practical knowledge ki koi value nahi hai?", considering that we are an integral part of Indian society, I am sure at least a few hundred times! Also, as a critic, I agree and accept the fact that the infrastructure for the State Board schools needs remarkable improvement. But are the syllabus and curriculum similar to what they were ten years ago? Is the criticism for the educational resources and curriculums valid in today's date? This is my question.

Let's deal with the most habitual method in which society calls out the State Board Schools. Schools are often labelled as hubs for rote learning. They are also tagged as institutions that do not promote a practical approach towards life. Yes, being a student from the Maharashtra Education Board, I too, feel that rote learning was a go-to move for every student. But while doing that, little did we realise that we were being geared up for real-life experiences.

For instance, if you visit a government centre for issuance of your driver's license. The agents will give you an extensive list of documents to be submitted, including stuff like Birth Certificates, 10th Grade Certificate, etc. We need to memorise this list,

don't we? Let's move on to another example. If you go to the market to buy groceries, you have a list in hand, but your mom adds 3-4 spices at the last moment. Don't you need to memorise them? If we take our grandparents to the doctor and the doctor gives them a long list of dosages, isn't it our responsibility to keep in mind the dosage? I know the doctors provide a prescription, but you certainly need to be a handwriting expert to decode that!

The next criticism is lack of practical exposure to the kids. I agree that most of the kids do not have access to the best grounds and laboratories or haven't even seen a computer before entering college! But that doesn't mean that the schools lack a practical approach. All the states have scholarship examinations for every interested aspirant. The examinations are MCQ based and have a variety of questions. These exams require the students to bring out their A-Game. They even have a specialised aptitude section wherein the student needs to deal with directions, patterns, diagrams and possibilities.

Exams like the Olympiads are something that every student can freely check out. The entrance fees of these exams are significantly high but waivable if the student cannot afford them. And lastly, the entrance exams for professional courses are

entirely based on practical knowledge. The state CETs are not a piece of cake for someone who relies on rote! Also, every state group of teachers and retired education-based professionals are working to address the issue. Maharashtra has exams such as HBBVS, NECM-1, NECM-2. Telangana has TGCTEs. Olympiads range from subjects such as English, French and even Computers.

Being from a State Board school, I am bound to speak in favour of the system, but at the same time, I must address the flaws. The infrastructure in most of the schools is not up to the mark. The school teachers try to give their best, but the infrastructural and logistical flaws hold them back. When the lockdown struck, it was the state board that found it difficult to find its feet.

I would conclude this by saying that the Indian Education System has flaws. But calling it a hub of "Rote Learners without practical knowledge" isn't valid anymore. The system has hiatus, but it is equally potent to making geniuses and nurturing prodigies! If it were a hub for "Rote Learners", K Sivan wouldn't be heading the Mangalyaan Mission. If this were an "Institution for Non Practical minds", you wouldn't have Raghuram Rajan once governing the RBI! It's high time State Government Schools earn the respect they deserve! 🏆





Let's go back a little in our memory lane to recollect a scene from Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows part 2 - the scene in the **Bellatrix vault**.

As the wagon stops on the way and flips to throw them (the trio and the Goblin) out, they fall from a height of almost 20 meters. Apart from simply shouting out of fear like others, Hermione Granger (the smartest and sweetest in the series) casts "Arresto Momentum", and their speed immediately reduces. It just seemed like they've fallen from a bed a few centimetres in height.

Having watched the series only in 2021, I regret not watching it before. Nevertheless, I've got tons of lessons to take from the Magnum Opus. So let's discuss one here.

Most of the human brains are programmed to choose the extremes, given any situation. That's why we see scams now and then. Just because our neighbours had their money doubled in a month, we invest in those instruments without research. (Positive extremity that only good will happen.)

Everyone wants to win big and quick. So everyone makes plans and stick to them, which is very good.

Let's invest in this stock or fund, and we'll be rich soon. There's no stopping this; it's the best that's out there.

A lot of us believe it's the right way to go. But when someone asks, what if it doesn't?

"You're a negative guy, and you are undeserving of success", whenever someone asks such questions, we try to escape by giving such answers. And it comforts us. Why not? We believe the plan we figured out is the best. So who'll care of the rest?

By lack of luck or some other factor, if these investments fail, people blame their fate.

We can't change fate; we can only try our best.

Answers like these are given by every person whose plan ever failed.

But do excuses save you from the consequences?

Do excuses get you back the money or time, or energy you've lost?

Does this excuse or explanation you are giving restore the time you've spent in anxiety or stress?

The answer is **NO**.

Yes, one thing is true, no one can say which instrument is best; what appears best might not be so.

Through this article, I shall discuss a method that will not tell you how to make a successful plan but will help you prepare for failures. This article is a strategy to create your strategies.

No one can avoid falling. Everyone falls. But the one who picks himself up soon is the one to win the race. The goal is to fall small

(if your plan doesn't work) so that it doesn't break you and you have enough left in you to get back soon.

Why is it essential to have a backup for failures?

Say you have 100 rupees with you. Say you have gained 50% on it. So you now have Rs 150. But only a 33% fall from here is sufficient to bring you back to where you are.

Just a tiny 33% fall is sufficient to turn the game, whereas you'd need 50% to climb. This example makes it clear why it is crucial to reduce the extent of declines.

As the author of the brilliant book "The Psychology of Money" says, "The most important part of every plan is planning on your plan, not going according to plan".

How should we create a plan?

Whenever creating a plan for yourself, ask the following questions:

1) *Have you done "Arresto momentum" to your plan? Did you ensure the fall won't break you? Falling is inevitable for everyone at some point; not getting broken after the fall is in your hand. All you have to do is to have a plan for this.*

2) *Did you make sure if your plan fails, you are still good to go?*

Try asking these questions the next time you figure out a plan. If your answer to these is YES, then you are good to go! ☘





Akshitha Dontula
IMG - 2020

NEW SEMESTER RESOLUTION

40

When I started thinking about writing an article, my very first one at that too, so many topics came to my mind, yet I couldn't decide on one. In the beginning, I wanted to write under Abhivyakti and then cut that thought out because I knew I lacked the knowledge and it needed time and research. At the same time, the title was all I could come up with and had no content. After much dilly-dallying, I thought, why don't I share a few things that I am trying to teach myself and their reasons? So, I was hoping you could think of this article as my attempt at trying my writing skills out.

Procrastination: Not proud of it!

Time management is something that I understand is very important. Everything must happen at a particular time or under a specified period. Otherwise, the work we do doesn't seem coherent. Whenever I feel like not doing a task, I forget about that and do something to pass the time. One day I came across a video on YouTube about a procrastinator's mind. I started watching it while lying on my couch. Under the video, a comment read, "anyone watching this video is procrastinating right now!". I realized that delaying

things was my forte, and I had to get rid of it because if I didn't, I was not going anywhere in my life. I didn't even know what procrastination meant until then... haha!

So, I decided that everything I do will be according to a well-balanced schedule, you know, so I don't have any regrets later.

Don't chicken out

Has it ever happened to you that you wanted to do something but couldn't do it because you were afraid you might not do well? It certainly happened with me in a lot of instances. When I was in 8th grade, our principal told all the students to talk for 3 minutes about any topic in the morning assembly to improve our public speaking skills. Soon, my turn had come, and I was all prepared to talk about the burning issue at that time, "Demonetization". But as soon as I held the mic in my hands and started speaking, my voice started shaking, and my mind went blank. All sort of thoughts overwhelmed me, like, "Will I stop midway? Is my vocabulary good? Are there any grammatical mistakes? Am I saying the right thing? What am I even saying right now?". It was the so-called "Stage fear". But then I took a deep breath and pushed all my fears aside. I still

couldn't perform as well as I had thought, but still, I was satisfied that I had overcome my fears. From then, I did not back out from speaking my mind out in front of an audience, and I think I've been improving.

I guess the first step to overcome fear is not to back out and face your insecurities.

Love yourself first

Online classes are taking a toll on us. Sitting in front of your system all day and working on it could be stressful at times. This lockdown already had a huge mental impact on all of us. We don't want our physical health to be in ruins too now, do we? So, I thought I could go out and enjoy the fresh air and work out to lose a few grams I've been putting on these months before it impacts my health adversely. Now, regularly exercising is not something all of us can pull off right, especially when we all tend to be so lazy. But I've been trying this out too, and it has yet to stand the test of time.

Everyone wants to achieve something, and they even work hard for it but remember to love yourself first before loving your work. "The kind of life we lead today is essentially the product of our habits - our daily routines, our daily processes" - Jim Berry ♣♦

"There is no elevator to success. You have to take the stairs."

– Zig Ziglar

LIFESTYLE
ABHISHAR v11.0





Let me begin by sharing an incident that significantly impacted my life and who I am right now. What I will be sharing is something I've never gathered enough courage to speak about, something I'm telling out for the first time in my life. Not because I was scared to tell it out or because of the fear of being judged, but because I was ashamed of myself for behaving that way.

I was in third grade, and it was my mom's birthday. She had bought gifts for my sister and me and gave them to us when she came to pick us up from school. Yes, my mom being the kind, loving woman she is, gave us gifts on "her" own birthday. She had two kits with her; one was a DIY mould set with which you could make decorative items, jewellery, and the like, and the other was a child-safe electrical kit with wires, batteries, switches, and lights with which you could build mini functioning circuits.

The pink DIY kit was given to my sister, and I got the other one. Now that was entirely sensible, for I have always shown interest in things related to these, and who would know you better than your own parents at that age, right? But guess what my reaction was? I cried. Yes, it was my mom's birthday, and she was giving me a gift, and I cried. I feel so awfully bad about it to

this day. But looking back at the incident, I realised that the reason I felt so horribly ashamed was that I genuinely liked the gift. What hurt me that day was the feeling that my parents thought of me as a boy. I despised the idea of being treated like a boy. I assumed there was something wrong with me, that I was breaking the rules, failing to be a good girl. Little did I know that it was completely normal and that it had nothing to do with gender.

So desperate to fit into society's norms, I, a third-grade student, pretended not to like the gift solely because I felt like it was something meant for boys. The worst part of it all was that it didn't end there; that one decision I made that day ended up having a domino effect. It has influenced all my day-to-day choices since then. I would force myself to stop liking anything termed for boys and only focus on stuff that made me more of a girl. And so to this day, I still ask myself this question, what would my life be like right now if I didn't try to pretend to hate the gift? What if I had just been honest about it and accepted it, not caring what society thought of me?

Before you misunderstand me, I do want to clear it out that I don't mean I hated the so-called "girly" stuff; I loved Barbie dolls as much as I loved Hot Wheels. I loved dressing up in little frocks and accessorising as much as I

could. It was simply that everything around me piqued my curiosity, and I wanted to take part in as many activities as I could. But people around me had put everything into separate categories based on gender, and I assumed I shouldn't do anything that wasn't strictly for girls.

Let me also make it clear that this is not particularly about the way girls are treated. It's about how we're socialised as children to conform to specific gender roles and about how we're treated differently based on gender. As girls, we've often been complimented for how pretty we look or how beautiful the dress is. For boys, we tell them how strong or brave they are. Girls are generally expected to be gentle and sweet, whereas boys are expected to be the polar opposite. It's normalized so much that expressions like "stop crying like a girl" or "you punch like a girl" are used so often, almost as if there's nothing wrong with them. Why are young boys taught that crying is something only girls are openly allowed to do? Using terms like these not only makes it a rule that boys are supposed to be strong and brave but also categorises girls as the exact opposite when in reality, they have nothing to do with gender.

Right from when we're born, our assigned sex determines how we're treated, how we must behave, or what opportunities we



get. We as children learn from society that people are categorised based on their gender and must behave in a specific way. Even today, to a large extent, men are expected to be the bread-winners of the family and are raised that way, while women are expected to prioritise family over career.

This generalisation of a particular activity meant for a specific gender is one of the most

unsensible and pointless things we continue to follow. There is something fundamentally flawed with this. The saddest part is that nobody is really happy with this, yet we continue to follow it. We as humans are not meant to fit into any category, each and every one of us is different, and that's the beauty of it. So why not embrace it?

To this date, this remains the biggest regret of my life. Was it

really my fault? For how could a child be blamed for wanting to fit into society? I guess we'll never know. But what we can do is put some effort into bringing a change in the way society works so no one, irrespective of their gender, has to feel the need to stick to the so-called gender norms. We still have a long way to go, but if we don't start now, then when? 🏆



Shivrani Jadhav

IMT-2020

Battle of Life - Give it a go...



Silver lining travels millions of miles,
With a new arise, makes me smile,
Brings back hope and ponder,
“How does it fight darkness alone?” makes me wonder,
Swiftly making me capture,
Life is an everlasting battle,
Meant to be fought alone,
Fight for a promising future,
A train of thoughts crossed the mind,
Everyone has battles of their own,
The fight within being the hardest one.
The battle is a play of your own,
No matter how much you are loved.
It keeps away friends and family,
Few paths make you travel lonely,
People do come and go,
You need to stand and fight solo,
Battles are boundless,

But we are time-bounded,
Get wind of what you crave for,
Don't worry about what might go wrong, think about what could go right,

Tag and tackle the battles,
catch your real kind,
Give it a go.

When things go wrong,
You may want to quit and cry,
Just have a glance at how far you have come,

The battles you have won,
Be cool and calm,
Let every breath be a weapon,
You will be unstoppable.

Moreover, it's rocky to win every battle,

Just fight with zest and let it go,
Few battles are meant to be lost,
To keep an eye to win a war,
At last, success is not how many battles you won,
But how firm you stand,
Just be patient and Give it a go.





Perhaps you're wondering why I am referring to MS Dhoni as Captain Fantastic. Didn't he use to be Captain Cool?

I don't hold it against you. We have always looked forward to Dhonis and Kohlis as captains in a cricket-obsessed country like India. Indian football has hardly managed to get any limelight; neither has Sunil Chhetri, the Captain Fantastic, a stalwart of Indian football and its flag bearer for the past decade or so.

Sunil Chettri found consolation in sports as a young boy growing up in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh. The youngster went on to try his hand at every sport he could find. He was born during a period when the country was witnessing a cricketing revolution of sorts, with Sachin Tendulkar announcing himself to the world. Unsurprisingly, he chose the bat and pads over football and decided to make a career out of cricket. But as they say, destiny had something else in mind!

His father was an Indian Army officer who was a member of the Indian Army football squad. His mother and her twin sisters were members of Nepal's national women's squad. Belonging to a middle-class family, Sunil was

well aware of his limitations and decided not to pursue his passion for cricket because his hardworking father could not afford to buy him the expensive equipment. So, sacrificing his dream of becoming a cricketer, he chose football because the only requirement in this sport was shoes. He decided to let his feet do the talking!

Following his parents' footsteps with a deep interest in sports, Sunil Chhetri started playing football at a young age and participated actively in numerous tournaments. But the financial situation of his family came back to haunt him as he could not manage a new pair of shoes for every few matches, so he had to sew his torn shoes himself.

The Chhetri family's financial situation was so dire that he had to resort to cheating and stealing to keep up with the demands of the sport he adored. Sunil admits that his life was permanently transformed when his mother embraced him with teary eyes and apologised for 'making a thief out of her son'.

Chhetri, a highly tenacious athlete, overcame every obstacle in his path before being recognised by Mohun Bagan in a

Durand Cup match while playing for Delhi City FC. Chhetri had no notion of what he wanted to do with his life before his father signed the contract. He has publicly confessed that if it hadn't been for the three-year contract with India's oldest club, he might have worked in a call centre or joined the army. Since then, he hasn't looked back, and with 77 goals in 123 national appearances, he is among the top ten international goalscorers of all time, even surpassing Messi. The cult around Chhetri has only seen a rise in recent years. This legend deserves a grand farewell from the entire country whenever he decides to hang up his boots, and we should always be grateful for all he has done for the country.

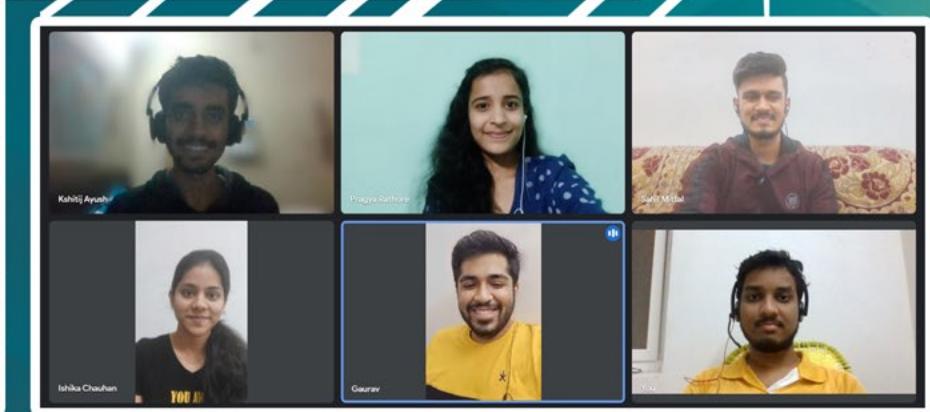
Be that as it may, the journey was not simple for a boy born into a middle-class family with very little exposure. Yet, Chhetri still managed to carve out a niche for himself and he will definitely go down as one of the greats of the game to have ever represented the country.

He wove the fabric of Indian football into what it is now, just like each thread on his shoe. ♣♦

"Most people give up just when they're about to achieve success. They quit on the one yard line. They give up at the last minute of the game one foot from a winning touchdown."

– Ross Perot

TEAM

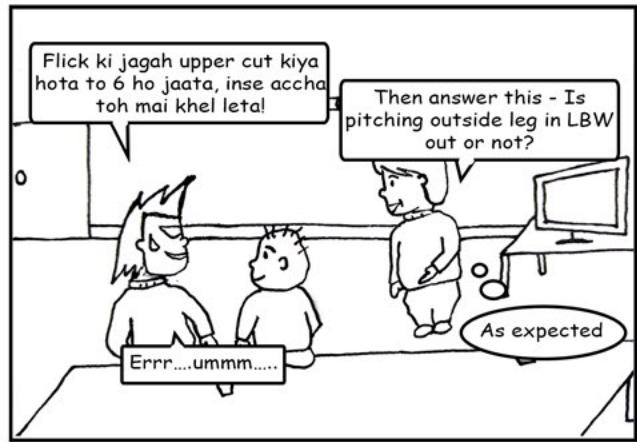
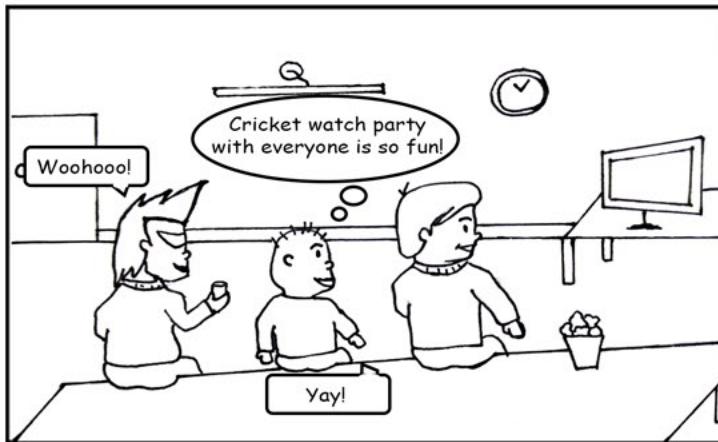
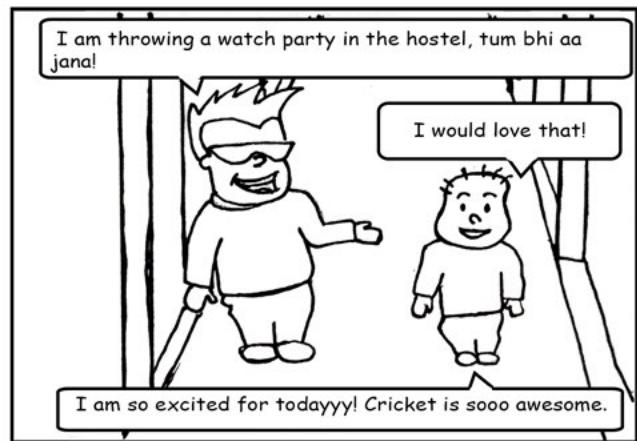
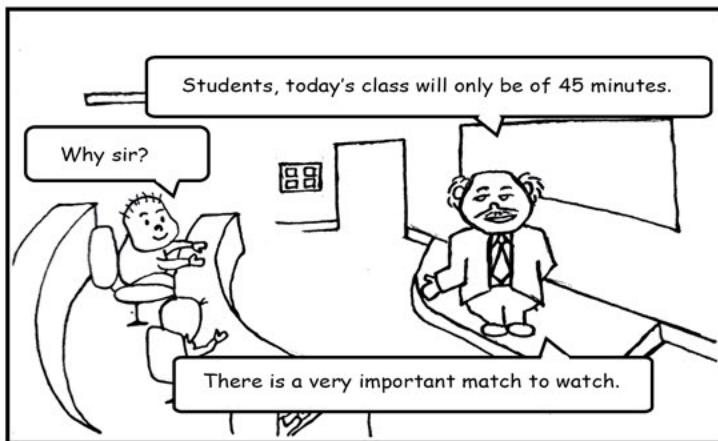


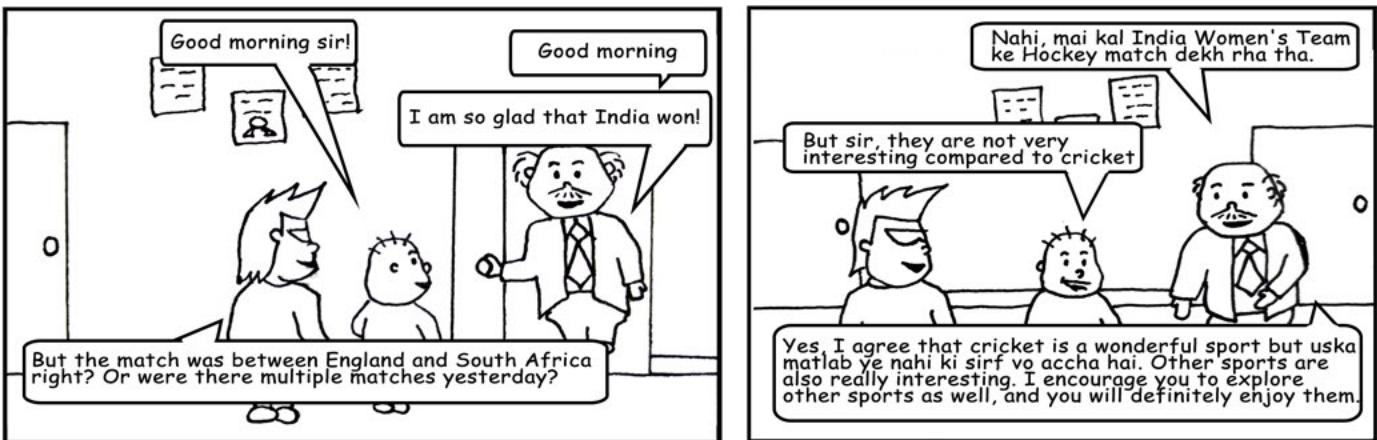
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Friends Fun & Dreams

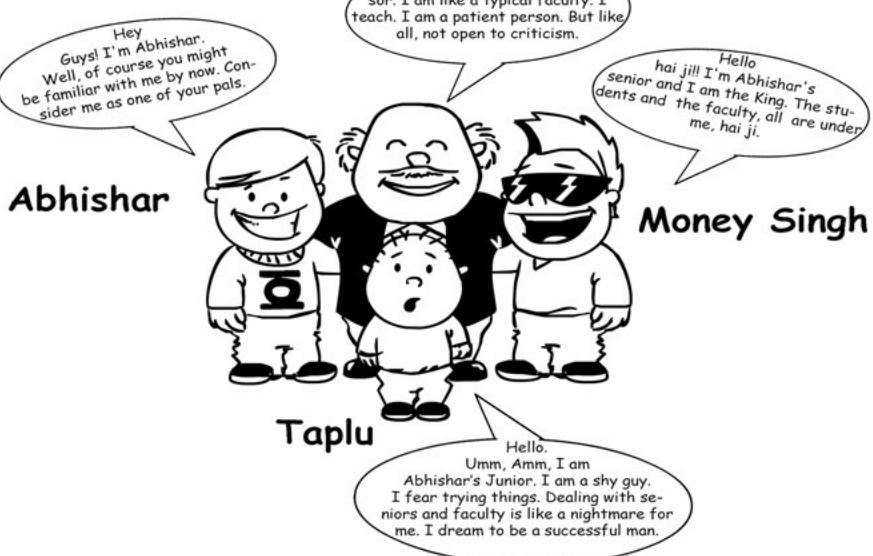
Abhishar is a good friend of students. He listens to their thoughts and experiences. Abhishar tries to chalk out easy solutions for students' problems. They feel motivated to showcase their hidden talents after talking to him. Personally, we feel he carries with him a very positive air and is capable of spreading happiness around. And we will try and make all the possible efforts to help him with this splendid companionship with you.

We would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Vishwas Singh Kushwaha, BCS-2020, for his valuable efforts in realising Abhishar and his friends in "Friends, Fun & Dreams". We couldn't have done it without him.





Professor Janaardan





Hello reader,
Are you upset or stressed with something in life?
Are you having some major problems in life?
Is there anything you want to get rid of?

I am sure that your answer to all of the above questions is a big "Yes" and most probably you will be having multiple problems to be resolved.

From poor to rich and from a child to an old person everybody is facing some or the other "severe" life problems.

But the question is why the hell are all human beings having problems and are melancholy?

In the next few lines, we will go through some of the reasons because of which things bother us and it is absolutely fine for you to disagree with my opinion and to have a different one.

1) I think mostly it is due to the fact that we human beings see even the smallest obstacle in our life with a "magnifying glass" and form an aura of being in a great problem. My suggestion is whenever you think you are in a problem just try to compare your "mighty" problem with the problems of people living in Afghanistan, who are not only poor, homeless, jobless but also country-less, people who have malignancies and other serious medical complications, people living on the streets around us etc.

2) Rat race is one of the major traits embedded in our DNA. For all of us, the definition of success is different, for some it may be to earn a lot, which is fine and for someone else it may be to live a peaceful life, which is also absolutely fine. I think it is we who make our lives full of obstacles as our ambition never gets satisfied and we want more and more from life. It's not wrong to be ambitious and also we should definitely have a competitive feeling in our heads but that should not surmount to a level where we are always envious of our peers. Because there will always be someone better off in our perception despite how successful we are. We should also cherish what we have.

3) Another reason is that we often worry too much about the future and spoil our present unnecessarily. Many of us come across various such thoughts like "what will I do in the future", "will I be having enough wealth" etc. These feelings and thoughts arise from the fact that the 21st-century ultra-competitive society, in which we are heavily obsessed or perhaps for us "the most important thing" in our life, will always judge us on the basis of visible outputs, i.e. results.

We must understand that in life the struggle or the journey to the goal is the main achievement and not the outcome. I believe a positive outcome is just an

acknowledgement, but unfortunately, it is the outcome that has the whole sole value for all of us. There is no shortage of people, including me, who understand this, know this but still get carried away with the result oriented methodology because we are prone to get influenced by others.

4) Also, I think there is one common blunder that most of us youngsters do, because of which we create an illusion of severe problems surrounding us; i.e. envisaging life in bits and pieces. As already mentioned, most of the youngsters are nervous and worried about the future. Because of this nervousness, they give a lot of attention or we can say they severely attach themselves to trivial things in life. Like a student preparing for a competitive exam like JEE thinks that getting into the desired institute or an IIT is everything or the most important thing and if he/she fails to do it, it is the end of the world. The same goes for most of us when we are in college and preparing for placements. We need to stay calm and understand that these things are not the end of life, these are merely small battles in the war which we are fighting to fulfil our dreams.

We must understand and remember that the main difference between failure and success is that failure teaches us, tells us about our shortcomings whereas success simply boosts our ego.



What we always have to remember is that whenever we fail in life, that moment is just a small part of our life and not the complete life. There will be many such other opportunities, provided that we don't lose hope and continue to strive hard for success again and again.

And also in the long run the thing that matters is what you have achieved and not when you have achieved. We all wish to achieve success as early as possible, and we must try for that, but there is no major harm if it comes late because what ultimately matters is that it should come in the desired amount. For example, there are many cricketers who get to play for India in the U19 squad but they never get to play for Team India. These players definitely have achieved success at an early age but still, it is not

their ultimate aim. On the other hand, there are players who never got the chance to play in the U19 squad, who arrived comparatively late in the team but have made a very substantial impact.

5) It is an old saying that only the dead fishes go with the flow. We all appreciate the concept that one chooses his passion as his career, but when it comes to execution we often tend to lack the courage. Many of us or many of our friends chose this field of computer science because they were either told to do it or they got carried away with their peers. We need to remove this peer pressure that we carry in our minds and have to show the courage to take risks, act on instincts but also remember to back them by giving our one hundred per cent! In either of the cases when we choose to go with the flow or

take risks but not back them 100% we are likely to remain frustrated and find out problems in every other thing happening to us in our lives.

Moreover, the best way to fight and conquer all life problems is to always try to do the right things at the right place and time, and never do anything which you don't want others to do to you and surely with God's grace, you will find a way to solve or live with your problem.

However it is always easier said than done, this article will serve as a gentle reminder for myself! 🏏

Akash Goel is working as a Software Engineer at Toppr.

Did you Know?



2002 – Kumble bowled with a broken jaw

There are some moments in history where one man steals the show, and this was one such moment where Kumble's passion for the game even overshadowed his jaw injury. In 2002, when India was playing a Test match against West Indies and it was Kumble's turn to bowl, he came out from the pavilion end with a bandage tied across his jaw and bowled 14 overs against Brian

Lara till he finally got him out. Though the match tied but Kumble won many hearts. Another inspiring moment came when spinner Kumble took 10 wickets in a match against Pakistan in 1999. After the magical bowling by Kumble (10 for 74), at the moment he took the final wicket, the entire crowd of thousands of viewers started chanting his name and the Indian team carried Kumble back to the pavilion in their arms.

CAREER MANTRA
ABHISHAR VTILO





This article is the product of an existential crisis moment experienced after watching a video from the channel Kurzgesagt. Check out the channel if contemplating heavy stuff in your life is your favourite pastime.

On a clear night, you can only see an utmost 2000 stars from the naked eye and 50000 from a small telescope. It is estimated that the universe will reach its death point in 1 googol year, a massive number equivalent to 10^{100} years. We on the other hand are a mere speck of dust lasting for an utmost 100 years. 100 years of existence, and we wouldn't encounter more than 2000 stars. 100 years of existence, and we wouldn't get to experience most of our planet. 100 years of existence, and we wouldn't get to live out most of our own lives.

If you are very lucky and get to live your share of 100 years, you will be on this planet for 5200 weeks. A quarter of which has already been lived by most of you reading this. 4200 weeks left. You would be entering into your work life and continue to work for the next 40 years, i.e. 2000 weeks. But let's be honest most of us would be hustling on weekdays waiting to live our lives on weekends. Assuming you did actually live your life on the weekend and did not just sleep the entire day, you lived a mere

570 weeks for 40 years. 1900 weeks left. This is the time you would retire and may decide to "actually" live your life. Go on that trip. Restart that hobby. But your body wouldn't allow you to do it. And remember we assumed you did get to live your 5200 weeks which for many of us wouldn't be true.

When the pandemic started a year and a half ago, I did not realize that I had seen most of the people in the institute for the last time. I wouldn't be meeting them again. I had eaten in the cafeteria for the last time, been to the classroom for the last time, walked down those roads for the last time, without realizing it was my last time. Every moment, you might be doing something for the last time. Do you really want to do it like that if it was for the last time? You might be talking to a person for the last time. Do you really want your last words to them to be that?

After the pandemic ends, and we move out of our homes, remember, it might be the last time you had such a good time with your parents. Once you move out, you would be visiting them on a few selected days of the year. You already have spent 90 per cent of your time with your parents than you will ever spend. The present times have bought you just a few extra weeks with them.

So is life all pointless, filled with

random last times? Are these 100 years years nothing but just another insignificant moment in the grand scheme of the cosmos? 10 billion years ago, a star died to create you. The atoms in your left hand probably are from a different star than your right hand. You were forged from stardust. Of the billion species that have walked, crawled and swam on earth, 99.9 percent are no longer around. For 4 billion years, each one of your ancestors on both sides of the family had been healthy, resilient and blessed enough so that you could be born. Take out even one of your ancestors from thousands of years back and you wouldn't be here. After your death, the atoms in you will be freed to roam in this universe until the end of time.

Your story isn't 100 years old. Your story started 13 billion years ago and is here to stay till the end of time. When disturbing even one of the variables in eternity wouldn't have resulted in you being you, how can you be a mere speck of dust? You are not an insignificant moment. You are the grand scheme of the cosmos itself. You have roamed the universe and visited every star invisible from the earth for the past billions of years. You are a guest of this planet for 5200 weeks. And you will be on your journey to visit every corner of this planet, this universe after



5200 weeks.

Notice how the tone of these ramblings shifted in perceptions from the first few lines till the end? How did we come from being a speck of dust to an atomic hitch-hiker in this galaxy? That's how people are. You could either find yourself in the cycle of burnouts with no clue about life, or you could try to fall in love with your life.

As you reach your quarter-life is, you are at the end of

various key moments of your life; your time with your parents is coming to an end, you may never talk again with some of your friends, your body will start becoming older in a few years and things you are procrastinating for tomorrow will never be done in coming decades of your life.

Some days would be bad, some good. But every moment, you already have what is needed to make your day special. You get to

decide how to figure that out, what things matter to you. Happiness can reside in that adventurous trip to the mountains as well as in that slice of pizza you ate on the balcony while it was raining. What matters is that you take that decision and live that to the fullest. 🏃‍♂️

Juhi Tiwari is working as a Software Engineer at Microsoft.



Prashant Dwivedi
IMG-2018

मायने बदल गए



रूप रंग है वही आईने बदल गए,
जिन्दगी तो है वही, मायने बदल गए।
मैं रहा भटक-भटक, मैं गया
अटक-अटक,
कैसी ये उठापटक, कैसे दिन बदल गए॥
जिन्दगी तो है वही, मायने बदल गए।
रूप रंग है वही आईने बदल गए॥

ये मन में कैसा शोर है,
भटक रहा हर ओर है।
लपक-झपक, लपक-झपक,
मन में कुछ गया खटक, कैसे हम
मचल गए॥
जिन्दगी तो है वही, मायने बदल गए।
रूप रंग है वही आईने बदल गए॥

किसकी ये तलाश है,
ये कौन दूर पास है।
है कौन किससे रुठता,
है किसका साथ छूटता, फिर से हम
संभल गए॥
जिन्दगी तो है वही, मायने बदल गए।
रूप रंग है वही आईने बदल गए॥

मन यहां वहां गया,
यहीं तो था कहां गया।
क्यूँ हुआ इधर-उधर,
यहीं तो था गया किधर, ठौर क्यूँ बदल गए॥
जिन्दगी तो है वही, मायने बदल गए।
रूप रंग है वही आईने बदल गए॥

मन गया बिदक-बिदक,
मैं गया झिझक-झिझक।
पांव रुक गए ठिठक,
मैं लिया खिसक-खिसक, वो थे जो
बदल गए॥



After completing class 12th and numerous exams, a student starts his college life with an eager and free spirit. College marks the first step towards gaining independence in life. After spending a month or two in college, exploring various domains and witnessing the success stories of the alumni, he decides to become the next big thing by acquiring expertise in multiple fields and becoming the jack of all trades - which in my opinion, is an excellent goal to aim for - only if executed with patience and resolve. You can do many things in a given amount of time, but not at once.

Holding a magnifying glass over a single leaf on a sunny day ignites it. Yet, holding the same magnifying glass over a pile of leaves on a sunny day does nothing! That is the power of focus. In college, the first big mistake that most students make is that they mistake the concept of acquiring skills as studying subjects in school. Schools emphasize theoretical learning, while to completely master a skill, one must be completely thorough with its practical application. Students try to take up 4-5 skills at one go, the same way they used to learn 4-5 subjects in school. In the process, they obtain a good amount of knowledge about the domains that they are studying. But there is a difference between mastering

and simply having superficial knowledge about a domain. One can't excel in any domain if one is unwilling to work consistently and devote several hours towards mastering it. The amount of time invested is not proportional to the productivity gained, and the final result is a gradual decline in interest in it.

Research has shown that we are 2-3 times more likely to stick with a particular habit if we make a specific plan beforehand. Psychologists call these plans implementation intentions because they state when, where, and how we intend to implement a particular behaviour. Although this is well-proven research, follow-up research has found that implementation intentions only works when we focus on one thing at a time. Focusing on multiple tasks leads to loss of commitment and reduces the chances of success by a large margin.

Distraction is a reason why we should avoid multitasking. Professor Gloria Mark from the University of California, Irvine, stated that it takes an average of 23 minutes and 15 seconds to get back to a task after an interruption. Think about how many 23-minute chunks get wasted when we rapidly switch between tasks. This time cost is termed context-switching. But what counts as a distraction? Everyone goes through the process of learning, working,

succeeding, and failing while dealing with something new. A person who is lost in this loop with 3-4 tasks simultaneously may experience failure more often than success, which may cause stress and may give rise to thoughts about giving up and can also result in procrastination. These thoughts hit our conscious thinking from time to time which is normal, unless they don't pop up when dealing with something that needs our attention. In this case, these thoughts may become distractions, leading to increased context-switching and reducing our productivity in the process. This may result in a loss of interest in learning. On the other hand, if we commit ourselves to master one thing at a time, we start experiencing more success. This becomes a driving force in the process by serving as a source of self-motivation, which boosts our morale and productivity.

The counterintuitive insight from the above research is that the best way to master multiple domains is not by wrapping your hands around all of them in one go. Instead, it is best to focus on and master one specific skill at a time, and then repeat the same for the next skill. While starting something new, start small, then go deep into it and stay consistent. Give it the time and attention it requires, and the result will automatically follow. ✎





Tathagata Paul
BCS - 2019

ANIME AND FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT IT



Life was kinda monotonic before college started. Same old get up, get to work, another day of worrying about JEE. Things began to change a lot when I got to college. Never have I ever had such freedom and time for interacting with so many people from different places. One of the things that my friends got me into from the start was anime. I mean, at this point, many of you might be thinking, "Anime? but isn't that cartoon that kids watch?" Here my friend, is where you went wrong. I always had my principles of never judging something before actually experiencing it and thought that I might as well give it a try. And no, I didn't start with a typical Anime like Demon Slayer (Demon Slayer is great. Go watch it!), I began with Fairy Tail, a pretty standard Shounen anime. When I learned that it had over 300 episodes, I was pretty horrified. I mean, I had a pretty steep start considering nowadays these shows only have like 12-20 episodes. But, I'm telling you, this was one of the best things I ever found. It was like finding a gold mine other than Netflix. There was so much content hidden beneath years of disbelief and misconception (that Anime was a cartoon meant for kids; meh) meant to be explored and discovered that I was astonished. And these shows were pretty well directed too. I

could feel so much emotion and feelings from the voice actors of these shows that made watching them even more fun. Now I'm not gonna bore you with every show that I watched, but I would rate some of them, and maybe you come to watch them sometime and enjoy them too! Here are some of my suggestions and a few thoughts:

Kimi no Na Wa. (Your Name)

What's better than starting with a movie, something short that will get you into the feel, and you can decide for yourself whether this kind of stuff is for you. The story is about two teenagers who wake up one day to find out that they are swapping bodies. The story is hilarious at times, and at times it will get you emotional as you try to imagine yourself as one of these characters. Things become even more complicated when they decide to meet up with each other, and you struggle to separate what's real and what's not. There is also a lot of hidden imagery (for example, trains as a metaphor to show the distance between city and village life) in the film. The production is top-notch, that is to say in simple terms, the film is very beautiful. And finally, the soundtrack by Radwimps is just the icing on top of the cake.

Kimetsu no Yaiba (Demon Slayer) and Jujutsu Kaisen

Ah, this one's famous. Demon Slayer generated total sales of at

least \$2.6 billion...in Japan. That is a statement in itself. What can I say about this masterpiece, just that it has stunning visuals, an excellent soundtrack, great voice-actors, and loveable characters? I am not going to say too much, but this is one of the easier animes to get into initially. But, just as a disclaimer, I am not a huge fan of this show. One of the reasons is that the story is too straightforward, which basically turns this whole anime into a "Redemption Arc." Suppose you want to watch a similar anime with a better story and more complex characters. In that case, I think Jujutsu Kaisen is definitely the new kid in the block (until Chainsaw Man is out). With fantastic fight scenes which will take your breath away, this anime is one of my favourites.

Neon Genesis Evangelion

This is one of those classic 90's Mecha Animes, but people frequently confuse it with being just that. I have not watched the anime yet, but I have seen a series of movies called "The Rebuild of Evangelion", which aims to rebuild the series. To be honest, I don't understand the story at all, and it's very confusing at times what is going on. But, the only reason I am putting this anime over here is because of how beautiful it looks on screen. There are sprawling landscapes of red and white and remains of a



cataclysmic event, which gives this anime a "haunting beauty" to itself. I have heard that the anime is better explained in terms of story, and I think it is a better option to go for (...maybe I will watch it someday). This show also received multiple accolades for a wide variety of themes often derived from the philosophical works of Sigmund Freud, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Søren Kierkegaard. The characters are rich and complex, with the protagonist Shinji being one of the most nuanced, popular, and relatable characters in anime history.

Naruto and Naruto Shippuden
Not much can be said about the brilliance of this show from just watching Naruto. You have to continue watching Naruto Shippuden, without which the story remains incomplete. This is a long anime with about 700 episodes in total, but almost 1/3rd of it can be skipped because

of fillers. I can't really say much about this show without spoiling one thing or another, but just to give you a context, the story starts with a boy named Naruto with a spirit of a Nine-tailed Fox inside sealed inside him, which, if released, might destroy the world. And then there is his friend Sasuke whose entire clan was killed by his brother. Both of them go on an epic journey, with Naruto looking forward to becoming the Hokage (leader) of his village, while all Sasuke seeks his revenge on his brother. You should definitely give this a try once you are ready to invest some time in a long series.

Tower of God

Finally, this is my favourite anime. Unfortunately, the anime only has 1 season, but you have to read the webcomics to fully understand how good this is. World-building on par with One Piece, fight sequences as good as

Naruto, mini Squid Games throughout the series, with a whole lot of betrayals, and insane animation and soundtrack to accompany that. This show failed to gain traction for multiple reasons, but I think that was because the first season itself couldn't do justice to the entire series. Definitely give this a try!

That's it for me today. There are lots of other shows to watch that I have not mentioned. I have entirely skipped the Isekai genre (...I know people who will kill me for that, LOL). Also, I skipped One Piece because I am watching that right now. I think it would easily be one of my favourites, but it's just very difficult to get into because of the large number of episodes. Maybe you will like some of these shows, and ultimately it's up to personal preference. See you next time! ☺

Did you Know?



2009 – Saina Nehwal become the first Indian woman to win a Super Series Tournament

Nehwal is among those very few players who have brought badminton into the limelight. She became the first Indian to win a Super Series tournament as she grabbed the much deserved title after defeating a higher

ranked Lin Wang from China in Jakarta.

Nehwal also made India immensely proud when she won a bronze medal in the 2012 Olympics. After the victory, instead of celebrating the victory in the court, Nehwal showed a more humble side and first went to the Chinese player who had retired from the match after an injury.



For his book "Blood and Earth", Kevin Bales interviews Ibrahim, a 23-year-old slave who has toiled in a gold mine since he was nine years old. He's on his deathbed. The dust and germs in the mine have filled his lungs with fluids. "*I want to be remembered*", Ibrahim says to Kevin Bales as their talk comes to a close. "*Will you give me a copy of your book after my tale is finished? I'd like to demonstrate it to others, to demonstrate that I'm not entirely worthless. All I want to do is demonstrate that something positive can emerge from my life.*"

You are most likely reading this content on a device. Minerals, including gold, are required for each gadget. Slave miners may have mined the gold in your device.

According to the 2018 Global Slavery Index, over 40 million individuals are victims of contemporary slavery, with 15 million being forced to marry. Slavery entails physical or psychological abuse, as well as control to create wealth. "Slavery is when one person rules another, employs violence to retain that power, and exploits them economically", says Kevin Bales. Slavery is defined by the exploitation and "ownership" of another human being for profit - the brutality may be physical or psychological, and the control may be verbal threats.

You might be shocked to learn that forced marriage is mentioned in the list above. Like other kinds of slavery, forced marriage involves a lack of choice, power imbalance, coercion, and exploitation of labour. Domestic servitude is another type of slavery. Domestic workers, usually women, move throughout the world to support their families back home. Employment agencies in their nation offer a high income and pleasant working circumstances, and a kind host family. This, however, may not be the case. Domestic servants' passports and cellphones are occasionally taken away, and they are compelled to work excessive hours. In extreme situations, they are locked up, malnourished, deprived of sleep, and frequently assaulted behind closed doors. They're imprisoned, terrified, and unsure of their surroundings. Domestic slavery exists all across the world, especially in the United Kingdom.

Every purchase we make has a backstory. These items, from electronics to textiles or handcrafted carpets to coffee, may involve enslavement. Consider a seemingly harmless commodity such as chocolate. While the chocolate bar may have been made in your nation, the cocoa in the chocolate was most likely sourced from West Africa, which produces 60% of the world's

cocoa. Thousands of children and adults work in slave-like circumstances on cocoa fields as you read this. Your purchase may unwittingly support slavery. Consumer demand for ethically sourced goods and services may send a strong message to manufacturers. Consider what would happen if we all refused to buy products with a history of slavery. Profitability for the company would plummet. The next time you buy something, ask yourself, "Where did this originate from?" Have you ever studied contemporary slavery in school? Slavery may have been mentioned in history classes as a thing of the past. Slavery, however, continues to exist and is a daily reality for millions of people. Raising awareness of the distressing and unseen reality of contemporary slavery requires courageous educators.

The good news is that thousands of individuals and anti-slavery organisations are taking action. One such organisation which focuses specifically on the education of youth is The NO Project. "The youth are the next generation of corporate leaders, policymakers, and consumers", says the founder of The NO Project. "How we choose to spend our money says a lot about who we are. So, the question is – who are we? And remember, another time, in another place, that enslaved human being could be you". ☘❖



ADIEU



All of the fun and great moments I had with my friends are something I'll cherish the most. All of the parties, films, festivals, PUBG, and Valorant nights. These years have changed everyone of us into a completely different person. Juniors, do everything to the best of your ability. It is preferable to attempt than to regret. Good luck in your life, adios.

- Kshitij Jain (BCS-2018)



Four years seemed like a lifetime when I first came here but now it feels like they flew away in a heartbeat. The memories we all shared are countless and unforgettable. The friends I've made here have been with me through thick and thin. The memories made and lessons learned will always be cherished and I'll always relive them from time to time. I'm grateful for all the opportunities and for this beautiful journey.

- Aditi Singh (BCS-2018)

IITM shaped a naive student who was at a loss for what to do next into this person who is excited to take the crazy ride life has to offer. We have evolved from interaction with seniors to going on trips with them; from gaming nights to Aurora nights; proxies to cricket sessions, each and every experience has shaped me into what I am today and is a memory to cherish. Never really understood why they say "Life is small" until now. Enjoy at the earliest without any regrets.

- Ryakam Achyuta Kumar (BCS-2018)



This college has given me some of the happiest moments of my life. These moments will always be unforgettable, from missing morning classes to working late during fests, from losing some school friends to making some of my closest friends in college. I will miss almost everything about college. I was in my 2nd year when a final year senior was leaving the hostel. I never imagined the time would fly so fast. I will always remember this college, and these memories will always be in my heart.

- Aman Mishra (IMG-2017)



Goodbye? Oh no, please. Can't we just go back to page one and start all over again? Little did we know that we are living the best days of our lives; from "Aaj toh tanki par chadna hai" to "chal BH-1 ka chakkar maarke aate hain", from "ek din aur mil jata toh phod deti" to "next sem pakka phod dungi", we all grew up. The funniest part is we actually skipped lectures to study for those lectures. We'll miss 5 forks in a bowl of white pasta! We bet our memories will outweigh our luggage as we'll leave the college for the last time.

- Rucha Pallewar & Saksham Arjani (IMG-2017)

ADIEU



Days, months, and years all pass down with the sunset, and we remember some days over the others. Memories are lived through and made; countless moments etched into the mind forever. Laughter, tears, and a bundle of emotions; college has been an incredible rollercoaster ride. Though it is tough to predict what the future holds, I am confident that I will always cherish these five years of college, for I entered them as a child and left as an adult.

- Keshav Gupta (IMT-2017)



These college years were nothing less than a rollercoaster ride. It taught me everything from making friends, washing clothes, pulling all-nighters, getting over hard times, and most importantly, never giving up. It won't be easy to forget all those late-night cricket matches, Janmashtami celebrations, late-night discussions on the cafeteria's rooftop, and those unplanned low-budget trips. At last, to all the juniors, keep exploring things, as every step, you'll learn something new, make lots of friends, and utilize your time productively.

- Aditya Shankar Mishra (IMT-2017)



IIITM has taught me that getting a job and good grades isn't what college life is all about. My years at the college, although shortened by Corona, helped me develop my personality. I had zero experience with many things, which I've gained over the years here. I will miss all these wonderful college aspects, friends, group parties, late-night cake-smashing birthday celebrations, and many more. Juniors, enjoy this journey; try to explore as much as you can.

- Jagadeesh Suggula (IMT-2017)



Time flies by when you are enjoying every moment of your life. College is the place where you get to meet people from varied backgrounds and cultures. Keeping all the learnings aside, the joy of fun activities during college life can't be expressed in mere words. All the parties, late-night debates and discussions, binging TV series and movies, teasing and insulting your close friends can never be forgotten. Thanks to all of my peers for giving me these beautiful memories to cherish!

- Anuj Singh (IMT-2017)



When I came to college, I dreamed of achieving extraordinary goals & making lifelong friends. And indeed, the college has been a dream come true. It was a dream we all lived through during very turbulent times. This rollercoaster experience has inspired us to dream big, embrace failure and stand up again. Fests and sports were the most happening parts of college life (apart from studies xD). Lastly, I want to thank all my juniors, seniors, and batchmates who have been crucial in this journey. I love you guys!

- Vishesh Khandelwal (IMT-2017)



Leadership has always been and will always be the most valuable human quality on the planet. Without it, no amount of wealth, resources or talent will ever achieve sustainable success for any team. It is an endearing quality with which all other odds and obstacles can be overcome. Leadership is a practice, a responsibility, and not a position of authority. Leaders must be on the front line, making decisions, giving practical advice, taking action and helping to get things done. One of the most effective leadership methods is by example. Each organisation begins with a leader. Their tone determines the interaction within the team and with the outside world. Human development, including personal development, is a core part of the art of leadership. This brings us to the first step: self-development. **Lead yourself first.**

The most challenging person to lead will always be yourself. This aspect of leadership requires the most discipline, devotion and determination. However, it is also this aspect that produces the most comprehensive rewards. Not all leaders are born leaders. The ability to lead is an art and a fantastic collection of skills that can be learned and sharpened as you practice it in day-to-day life. These skills come through some best habits that can be seen in every successful leader. Dedicate

yourself to a high level of learning. To be a great leader, you have to be highly competent and command a high level of knowledge, growth, and improvement. Knowing "how" to do something isn't enough, but you need to dig deeper into understanding "why". This is key to innovation. "One of the things that limit our learning is our belief that we already know something." It is that part that distinguishes you from others in terms of knowledge and techniques.

Along with dedication to knowledge, *make self-discipline a part of your lifestyle*. Eliminate making excuses. Self-discipline habits help in keeping the mind fresh and active by *developing a positive attitude*. *Surround yourself with great players*. Build a solid inner circle, and daily spend time with people who have a variety of gifts. With a strong circle ready, you will be prepared for anything that comes your way. One of the biggest fears of many people is interacting with someone senior or in a position far superior to you. *Develop courage by facing fear*. Do something simply for the sake of developing courage - make a difficult phone call, speak to an audience, or write an article.

By a show of courage, you will inspire others to follow and to walk in your footsteps. But remember, you can't cover your deeds with courage. You have to

examine them and their outcomes. *Spend some time regularly looking for "cracks" in the major areas of your life. Take note of any instances where you see such cracks.* Do all you can to repair those cracks by confessing and dealing with the consequences of your actions. After facing past actions, begin a plan that will rebuild you and prevent you from making mistakes in the future. By doing so, you will *develop a sense of commitment and responsibility*. These are the primary areas most aspiring leaders lack. Your depth of character is key to determining your success as a leader.

Along with self-development, one of the defining traits is knowing where your team is going. It is crucial to have a vision. **Cast your vision.** No matter how strong your leadership skills are, your team is going nowhere without a vision. Leaders with vision feel a sense of purpose, have a plan to get there and are able to boldly convey that to others. You must clearly and vividly communicate your vision to others in a compelling way that will convince them. They should be able to believe in what you are saying. Generally, good leaders speak to them about why their lives will be better off for having achieved this to motivate them.

This brings us to the third step: **interaction with the team**



members and leading them. The tone set by leaders determines the way members of the team interact with each other and with those from outside. Hence, a leader must lay down the right tracks for interaction and team culture.

How you interact with your team are the standards for others. *Be straightforward and crystal clear in all communications.* Express yourself in a way that your listeners can understand.

With people becoming increasingly self-conscious, establishing a balanced team culture is essential. Leaders must have solid interpersonal skills. Interacting with and persuading others is an art and a science in itself. To achieve that, you first need to *understand others.* Understand what drives people's desires, fears, needs, wants and why they react in a certain way in various situations. See situations from perspectives other than your own. *"The most effective bosses devote enormous effort in understanding how their moods, quirks, skills, and actions affect their followers' performance and humanity."*

— Robert Sutton

Then comes motivation. The easiest way to make anybody do anything is to make them want to do it. Speak in terms of their needs and desires. Explain "what's in it for them". Lastly,

you have to empower others. Encourage your teammates to reach for their highest potential and to believe in themselves.

The next step is the way of working. The most critical task is to organise. Everyone tries to understand a problem, manages the flow of ideas, makes decisions and implements them. Organising well means less chaos. You should be able to recognise the proper resources needed for the team. Once you have organised your things, you need to have a strategy ready to implement the ideas. Strategy is an art of action. Leaders should focus more on defining and communicating the intent and objectives while spending less time on detailed steps. As you climb further up the ladder, leave it to those below to decide on the actions to take. Teams should have the freedom to choose and modify their actions to changing circumstances while being guided by the overall objective. You, as a leader, have a lot of responsibilities and cannot spend time on each and everything in the working. It is seldom the case that all things go well. To assess your team's actions, you have to *build feedback loops and maintain them* so that they work even if you are at the peak of your success - because that's when

others are shy to tell you about your possible mistakes, which may eventually drag you down.

"Pay attention to negative feedback and solicit it, particularly from friends. Hardly anyone does that, and it's incredibly helpful."

— Elon Musk

Take responsibility for every outcome. Great leaders never play the victim card. They recognise that being ultimately responsible for all successes and failures that result from the actions that the team takes is part and parcel of being a great leader. You have to analyse your failures and note your mistakes and weaknesses. Work on them to turn them into success.

Summing things up, the value may not lie in acquiring proven habits but in the lessons learnt by consistently instilling leadership habits over the years. There is no hard and fast rule, but generally speaking, not only should you know the difference between what to do and what not to, but you should be practising it and living your words each and every day. As a leader, you are in the public eye 24/7. There can be no shortcuts. Conduct yourself with the very same level of discipline and maturity that you expect from others - and you will be rewarded with it in return. ♣♦

"A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.





'All life deserves respect, dignity and compassion. All life.'

— Anthony Douglas Williams

Vegans attempt to conduct their lives in such a manner that they do not exploit or harm animals as much as possible. This entails sticking to a plant-based diet. Vegans avoid eating meat, fish, shellfish, eggs, honey, and dairy products like cheese since they are derived from animals. For many vegans, maintaining a devoted vegan lifestyle includes avoiding goods that have been tested on animals and not wearing garments made from animal skins.

Vegetarians do not eat meat or fish, although they can consume eggs, honey, and dairy products; vegans, on the other hand, do not consume any animal-based foods. Vegans contend that suffering occurs during the production of these goods. For example, they claim that male calves are murdered on certain

dairy farms because they are too expensive to retain, and cows are killed when they become older and produce less milk on other farms. Male chicks are also murdered on certain egg farms since they do not produce eggs. When it comes to honey, vegans argue that bees create honey for bees, not for people, and that humans taking honey from bees can harm their health.

Although the Vegan Society was formed in 1944, there is evidence that people have been refusing to eat animal products for over 2,000 years. Pythagoras, a Greek mathematician and philosopher who lived in the sixth century BC, advocated for animal welfare and ate a vegetarian diet. Even earlier, vegetarianism was practised in the Indus Valley, Babylonian, and Egyptian civilisations. According to the Vegan Society, Percy Bysshe Shelley, a prominent romantic poet, was one of the first persons to

publicly protest eating eggs and dairy products on moral grounds in 1806.

Many individuals go vegan because they think that all sentient creatures, including animals, should have the right to life and freedom. There are, however, other causes. Vegans claim that meat and other animal products are extremely harmful to the environment. They point out that growing grain to feed animals in the meat sector requires a large amount of water. The massive amount of grain required by the meat industry frequently results in the destruction of forests and ecosystems.

On 1st November of every year, vegans all over the world celebrate their way of life. There are workshops, exhibitions and public debates on World Vegan Day, and it is a wonderful opportunity for anybody thinking of becoming a vegan to learn more about the subject. ☘

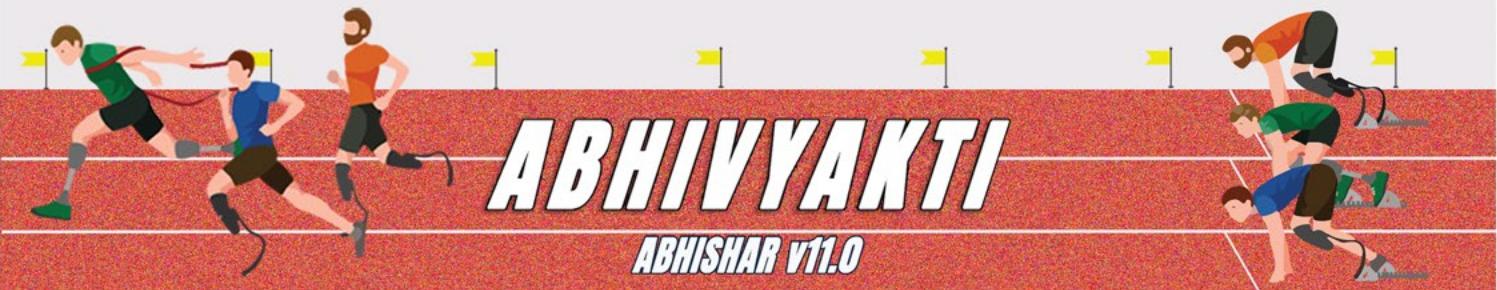
Did you Know?



Only two people have ever won gold medals during the Summer and Winter Olympics

Gillis Grafstrom and Eddie Eagan hold this distinction. Grafstrom, from Sweden, won gold in figure skating in the 1920 Summer Olympics as

well as the 1924 and 1928 Winter Games. Eagan accomplished this feat in different disciplines, taking home gold in boxing in 1920 and later winning a gold medal at the 1932 Lake Placid Winter Games in the team bobsled event.





Arun Kumar Rathod
BCS - 2020

HABIT TRACKER GUIDE: WHY AND HOW TO TRACK YOUR HABITS

60

What is a habit tracker and how does it work?

A habit tracker is a simple tool for determining whether or not you have performed a behaviour. The simplest method is to get a calendar and cross off each day that you follow your schedule. If you meditate on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for example, each of those days gets marked with an X. The calendar develops a record of your habit streak as time passes.

The classic look is to mark each day with an X. I want something more design-oriented, so I use my habit tracker to shade in the cells. You might also use checkmarks or dots to fill in your habit tracker. Whatever design you choose, the important thing to remember is that your habit tracker gives quick proof that you followed through with your habit. It's an indication that you're getting somewhere.

Of course, this isn't all it can accomplish. Tracking your habits is effective for three reasons. First, it creates a visual indication that can serve as a reminder to take action. Second, it is energising and motivating to see how far you have come. And lastly, you don't want to lose your winning streak. It's gratifying to be able to document your accomplishments at the moment.

Let's break down the advantage of using a habit tracker:

1) The first advantage is that a

habit tracker will remind you to act. Habit tracking creates a succession of visual clues on its own. You'll be reminded to act again when you glance at the calendar and notice your streak. People who keep track of their progress towards goals like losing weight, quitting smoking, and lowering blood pressure are more likely to succeed than those who don't. According to a study of over 1600 people, those who kept a daily meal diary lost twice as much weight as those who did not. A habit tracker is a simple way to keep track of your habits, and just tracking them can make you want to change them.

Tracking your habits also holds you accountable. The majority of us believe we act better than we actually do. One method to overcome our blindness to our conduct and see what's really happening on each day is to use measurement - you're less inclined to lie to yourself when the proof is right in front of you.

2) Another advantage of using a habit tracker is that it encourages you to keep doing what you're doing. Progress is the most effective kind of motivation. We become more driven to continue down the road when we receive a signal that we are moving forward. Habit monitoring can have a significant effect on motivation in this way. On bad days, this can be especially effective. It's easy to lose sight of all the progress

you've already achieved when you're down. Habit monitoring is a subtle reassurance of how far you've come by providing visible confirmation of your hard work. Furthermore, seeing an empty square each morning can drive you to start working because you don't want to lose your progress by breaking your streak.

3) A habit tracker gives you instant gratification. Tracking your habits is fun and enjoyable. Crossing something off your to-do list, completing an entry in your fitness journal, or marking an X on the calendar is satisfying. It feels nice to see your results improve, and if it feels good, you'll be more willing to stick to it. Habit tracking also aids in keeping your concentration on the task at hand: you're more concerned with the process than the outcome. You're not trying to acquire six-pack abs; instead, you're attempting to keep the streak going and become the type of person who never skips a session.

So, how do you build habits using a habit tracker?

Despite its many advantages, a habit tracker is not appropriate in every situation or for every person. Many people are opposed to the idea of tracking and measuring their progress because it forces you into two habits: the habit you're attempting to create and the habit of tracking it, and this can feel like a burden.



However, nearly everyone may benefit from habit tracking in some way, even if it's only for a short period of time.

What can we do to make habit monitoring a little more manageable?

Manual tracking should, first and foremost, be limited to your most critical routines. It is preferable to track one habit regularly rather than ten on an irregular basis. My habit tracker is usually limited to my three or four most significant habits. Second, keep track of each measurement as soon as the habit starts. The habit's completion serves as a reminder to write it down.

How to quickly recover when your habits fail?

Finally, I'd like to talk about what you should do if you fall off the wagon. At some time, every habit streak comes to an end. It is impossible to be perfect. Sooner or later, an emergency will arise—you will become ill, you will have to travel for work, or your family will require more of your time. Whenever something like this happens to me, I try to

remember a simple rule: *Never make the same mistake twice*. If I miss a day, I attempt to make up for it as soon as possible. It's okay if I skip one workout, but I'm not going to miss two in a row. Maybe I'll eat an entire pizza, but I'll make sure to eat something nutritious afterwards. I begin the next streak as soon as the last one expires. I won't be perfect, but I'll try to avoid a second mistake.

How long should I keep track of my habits?

"How long does it take to form a habit?" is one of the most frequently asked questions. You'll get a variety of responses: 21 days, 30 days, and 100 days. One popular answer right now is 66 days because one study indicated that it takes 66 days on average to form a habit. However, depending on the complexity of the habit, the range was quite large even within that research. When people ask, "How long does it take to become a habit?" I believe they are trying to get at something else. "How long till it's easy?" people frequently ask.

"How long until I don't have to exert as much effort?". With practice, all habits get simpler. However, this line of inquiry ignores the fundamental reason for developing better behaviours in the first place.

How much time does it take?

The truth is that the answer is indefinite because it is no longer a habit once you stop doing it. A habit is a way of life to be lived, not a goal to be reached. You want to create slight, long-term adjustments that you can stick with for years. And a habit tracker is one of the tools in your toolbox for changing your habits. It's an excellent method to demonstrate your development and encourage you to come back the next day.

As a final piece of advice, remember that even if you decide to not use a habit tracker, consistency is the key to building long-lasting habits in your life. I hope this article motivated you to start building your own habits! ☺

"In essence, if we want to direct our lives, we must take control of our consistent actions. It's not what we do once in a while that shapes our lives, but what we do consistently."

— Tony Robbins



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Harsh Valdh
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WEB DEVELOPMENT AMID THE PANDEMIC

62

I still remember the time when I joined college last year, somewhat around November. After a tedious counselling process, I just wanted to get into a college ASAP. It was quite overwhelming when I finally received the mail for the orientation session from our college. I was too excited to go to a different city; I mean, the thought of leaving my hometown was quite upsetting, but still, there was a whole lot of opportunities waiting for me. I started purchasing stuff for college like laptop, new clothes and other essentials. Then suddenly we all got to know that due to the COVID-19 pandemic our college won't be opening for that semester. Our lives were literally turned upside down. We had no idea that this pandemic would take away all the joys and excitement of our lives and leave us with boredom blues. Gradually semesters evolved into a year, and we did not get a chance to step into our college premises. It was a bit challenging at the beginning. Everything felt like a major setback because we were missing the best year of our college life. However, a major shoutout to all the seniors who organized some great events and orientations, which made us feel as we weren't missing out on

anything. Though all the events were top notch, yet in my personal opinion, the best one was "Web Month" organized by the AASF team.

I guess that was the time when my batch mates and I started learning about Web Development. Having no prior knowledge about this field, it was like wandering in a jungle. The sessions of this event were very beneficial for a student like me who didn't even know what HTML or CSS was. Though I am not a pro developer as everyone is always a learner but, I still came a long way as far as frontend development is concerned.

It feels hard to sit at home and do stuff alone when you don't have friends coming by your hostel room every now and then. Talking about my Web Development journey, I started with the basics, that is HTML. I then moved onto CSS and finally CSS3. After that, I learned about JavaScript basics followed by Bootstrap to finally making my first shabby looking portfolio website, which I hosted on Netlify. This was the time when I got to know more about Udemy and chill.

I still remember making a photo gallery with photos of some wild animals, which scaled on

hovering over it using HTML and CSS. I even learned a bit about React and made a simple project by coding along, and here I am today equipped with some knowledge of the Web Development world. Currently, I am learning stuff about the backend. There have been lots of ups and downs. Many a time when I was stuck, I texted my seniors or posted it on the discord community. I guess having a great bunch of supportive people around helps us to grow a lot more.

I still text my seniors when I get stuck somewhere, and the best thing is they are always there to help. This past year if I see precisely, has not been so much boring altogether. I will always remember the online birthdays we celebrated, the late-night games we played with our seniors and the classes we skipped. There was a whole bunch of stuff we learned about.

Finally, I would conclude this by saying, I am very much looking forward to meeting all these wonderful people who made my monotonous life quite interesting in the past year and hopefully learn a lot more from them. Until then, I'm being opportunistic and optimistic and looking at the positive side of things life has to offer! 🤝

“Innovation is the outcome of a habit, not a random act.”

– Sukant Ratnakar



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आओ मित्र आत्महत्या करें। क्यों चौंक रहे हो? क्यों बुरा मान रहे हो? मेरी तरफ इतना आश्चर्य से मत देखो। अगर तुम्हें कुछ अनुचित लगा तो मैं अपने शब्द वापस ले लेता हूँ। किन्तु सोचिये मैं न कहूँ – तो भी आमंत्रित तो तुम हो ही और आत्महत्या तो तुम कर ही रहे हो। भेद मात्र शब्द और उसकी शैली का है, न कि क्रिया और उसके संपादन का। अपनी स्पष्टवादिता के लिए क्षमा प्रार्थी हूँ।

आपने मेरा आमंत्रण तो तुकरा दिया, उन आमंत्रणों की उपस्थिति को कैसे नकारोगे जो तुम्हें उत्तेजित करते हैं कि एक झटके में अपने कमाए जीवन को गँवा दिया जाये, एक असफलता के कारण जीवन भर कमाई सैकड़ों सफलताओं को रद्दी मान लिया जाये, बचपन से संजोये सपनों को साकार न होने दिया जाये, अपने ही संरक्षकों को ठेंगा दिखाकर उनकी गढ़ी कमाई को धृता बता दिया जाये।

भाई मेरे – घोरतम निर्लज्जों की भाँति ये कौन है जो मनवाही प्रेमिका को पाने के लिए कुछ भी और किसी को भी खोने को तैयार है? फटे और निकलमे जूते से भी कम मोह का परिचय देता हुआ ये कौन है जो अपने दोस्त से 2 पैसे कम की नौकरी मिलने पर खुद को शून्येतर बनाने की राह पर अग्रसर होने को है? अखिर ये कौन है जो अरबों की दौलत का आसामी होने पर भी स्वयं को अभावों से घिरा मान रहा है? दुनिया भर को आस्था बाँटने वाले वो कौन संत-महंत हैं जिनकी स्वयं की आस्था डोल गई? कौन है जो लॉटरी न निकलने पर और निकलने पर भी प्राणांत करता है। यह किसका आमंत्रण है? अथवा

कौन आमंत्रित है?

'आत्महत्या' तो मेरा शब्द है, तुम इसके आमंत्रणों को क्या कहोगे? और क्या संज्ञा दूँ उन कार्यों को जो इस आमंत्रण के प्रोत्साहन पर तुम कर रहे हो? अपने सगों और संमुखों की भावनाओं को छोट पहुँचाते समय तुम्हें प्रतीति होती है कि तुम आत्महत्या कर रहे हो? अगर नहीं होती तो सच मानिये कि आप आत्महत्या कर नहीं रहे हैं अपितु कर चुके हैं। मैं बहुत निराश और हताश नहीं हूँ पर एक छलावरण की चकाचौंध के वश में सबकुछ अनदेखा करने पर जो मृतप्राय अवस्था होती है वही आत्महत्या है।

'आत्महत्या' तो शब्द मात्र ही है। इस क्रिया में भी कई भेद हैं। यह शब्द तो उन सभी घटनाओं के लिए प्रयुक्त हो सकता है जो खुद मरने वाले की सकारात्मक और नकारात्मक क्रिया का प्रत्यक्ष या अप्रत्यक्ष परिणाम होती हो, जिसके परिणाम को वो जानता हो। उदाहरण के लिए भोजन न करना भी उतना ही आत्मघाती साबित हो सकता है जितना कि खुद को पिस्तौल से गोली मारना।

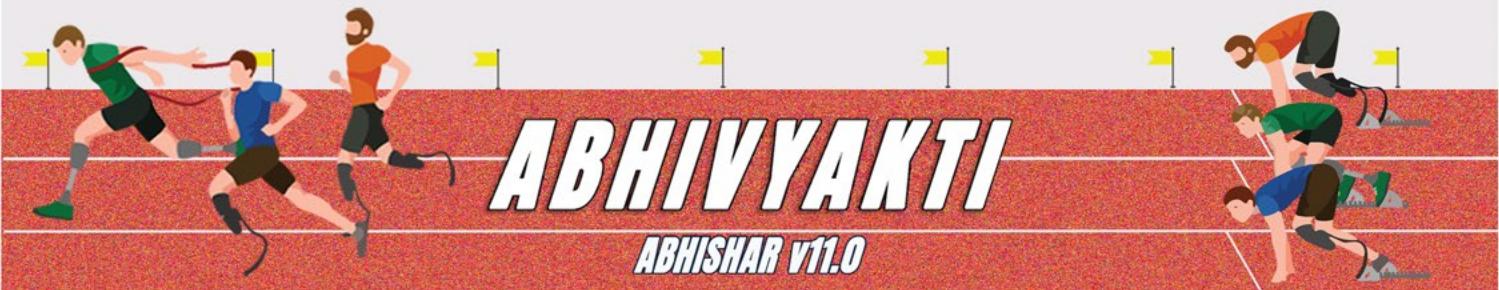
आमंत्रण को स्वीकारने वाला ही उत्तरदायी है अथवा ये व्यक्ति विशेष के मानसिक दिवालियापन का परिणाम है? ऐसा नहीं है। आत्महत्या तो सामाजिक घटना है जिसके पीछे के कारण भी सामाजिक हैं। जिस तरह से अहंवादी आत्महत्या की घटना में व्यक्ति के सामाजिक रिश्तों का ताना बाना इतना ढीला हो जाता है अर्थात् समाज में उसकी कोई जगह नहीं है अथवा समाज में तिरस्कृत व्यक्ति के अहम को ठेस पहुँचती है या पहुँचायी जाती है। क्या ये वही समाज

नहीं है जो खोखली आस्थाओं और विश्वाशों के दम से व्यक्ति के सामाजिक जीवन का यूँ एकीकरण करता है जिसमें उस व्यक्ति के व्यक्तित्व का मूल्य अर्धहीन लगने लगता है, जिसके चलते व्यक्ति केवल और केवल यंत्रवत् सामूहिक हित और विचार के कार्यों का अनुसरण करता है और परिणाम परार्थवादी आत्महत्या। क्या यह समाज ही नहीं है जिसने एकांकी जीवनशैली को इतनी तूल दी और विलासिताओं का इतना अम्बार खड़ा कर दिया? जब कभी व्यक्ति का सामना उन अस्वाभाविक परिस्थितियों से होता है, जिनका अनुकूलन वह नहीं कर पाता और अस्वाभाविक आत्महत्याएँ होती हैं? सामाजिक प्राणी होने के नाते ही सही: आत्महत्या क्या केवल जीव ही करता है या समाज भी? इस तरह के समाज को आमंत्रण कहेंगे या प्रस्तावक या कुछ और? यहाँ कौन आमंत्रित है?

इतिहास चूँकि दुर्घटनाओं के विवरणों का ही संकलन है, अतः पढ़कर उससे सीख लेने और निराश होने का औचित्य नहीं। इसलिए आत्मसंतुष्टि, छलावरण की चकाचौंध, कोई क्या कहेगा आदि के आमंत्रणों/स्वरों को उसमें स्थान दिलाने का वादा तो कोई नहीं कर सकता परन्तु उन आमंत्रणों/स्वरों के प्रति क्रुतज्ञ होकर यह प्रार्थना अवश्य की जा सकती है कि आत्महत्याओं की यह कौम शीघ्र ही क्षीण होते होते समाप्त हो जाएगी। परिस्थितियों से लड़ें, ध्यान रखें कि जीवन की गंगा का पानी कभी भी इतना नहीं उतरता कि निराशा का रसातल दिखने लगे।

Puzzle Zone Answers

5. Hungary 6. China 7. Yorker 8. Europe 9. Billiards 10. Mercedes
1. Italy 2. Tokyo 3. Brazil 4. Four





Bang on! The title seems tricky and objectifies something unwanted. But, one long pending crux of the Food Wars is Sugar, aka White Sugar only. India is the diabetes capital, and it didn't happen all of a sudden or just once. In fact, it has been happening for ages, and we are going to stay on the top, until and unless voluntary self-regulation is hugely backed by policies and healthy alternatives that are well-known yet long forgotten.

Sugar is a celebration for people across India, and we consume double the recommended standards of it. There are many common ingredients in our household that are not required in the quantities we consume, yet we do, and sugar takes the top position among them.

Europeans, due to their internal conflict on various aspects viz., food scarcity, faith etc., had started colonising other countries and India was no exception. Caribbean Islands were the first chosen locality in terms of geography to commercially exploit agriculture for the production of sugar. And, that's how hundreds and thousands of bonded labourers ended up in the picturesque islands from Africa and British India to meet the demands of Europe at sub-par costs. Indians have been aware of the process of manufacturing sugar since Vedas, but the industrial production introduced by the British turned into one of

the heavily incentivised agricultural produce in the early 20th century. But white sugar brought along many health and environmental issues. Production and consumption of sugar and jaggery products had changed places because of the so-called brainwash. If one feels the term is repeated, let's replace it with a corporate stronghold, marketing, political support, incentivising sugarcane farmers, etc.

Growing sugarcane is a very water demanding agricultural practice, so much that the highly rain-fed regions of India are already on the verge of completely losing their water table forever. This, in turn, has a domino effect on the climate cycle, crop production and, of course, our lifestyle. But do we need that much white sugar? NO, this is definite and known.

To give a perspective, farmers want to cultivate sugarcane because of high returns. Packaged food industries are the biggest takers of sugar from mills, and these companies hugely invest in marketing through endorsements, vocal claims, and catchy taglines. Even though these companies are at a liability to present the nutritional facts on their products, we as consumers often overlook the figures that are in small font. On the other hand, policymakers are wary of marking boundaries against these businesses, and thus we fall into

this vicious triangle of getting attracted and believing in what they say. After all this, sugarcane farmers are the ones with huge returns of nearly 20K crores and more.

With regards to the health issues, I feel we are already feeling the burn in the form of diabetes that is affecting the food habits of an individual and families as well. Hence, to cross the fence of this malady we brought upon selves, we may say that policymakers have to incentivise other agricultural products that are healthy and environmentally sustainable. This is to be followed up with stringent guidelines in protecting the consumers and citizens from falling prey to marketing campaigns. Over and above, it is the consumer that has to voluntarily self-regulate and identify the right packaged products before purchasing.

On the closing note, sugars are one of the prime forms of carbohydrates and are essential for us, but we have to reduce the excessive consumption of white sugar. Furthermore, let's hope to campaign against www.meetha.org as white sugar is nothing but empty calories, and the website exhibits it as a superfood. So, let's end this war by starting one against this cartel. ☘

Nanda Kumar Ambati is working at Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India.



It's a cold evening in December. You've made it home after an excruciatingly dull day at the office. The reports have been filed, co-workers dealt with, and now all you can think about is crashing on your couch and aimlessly binge Netflix. Suddenly your phone goes off. It's your grandma; a nervous smile creeps up your face.

"Hello"

"Hello?" she has her phone too close to her face

"Move the phone a little further away."

"What? Oh, yes"

"So, how have you been?"

"Well, you know how things are around here, last week..." and she starts going into excruciating detail about how the person who was supposed to do a thing didn't do it and who dealt with it while going into even more obscure tangents.

You nod, and she asks if you've been eating well. You respond with how the food at work is bearable and how much you miss her parathas and the desserts she made. You both have a hearty laugh.

You know that this isn't real. She passed away before you even got your job. But she left before you were ready to let her go. Your grandma is probably being rendered on a supercomputer somewhere in Iceland. But like a bandaid that's been on for too long, you just can't bring yourself

to quit.

A recent article published in the 'San Francisco Chronicle' details the story of how a forlorn boyfriend was able to "reconnect" with his deceased girlfriend using project December. A text-based chatbot that uses GPT-3 (an autoregressive language model that uses Deep Learning to produce human-like text) to communicate with users under the guise of whoever you choose to feed into the application in the form of old text messages / social media posts. People were quick to point the eerie resemblance of the situation to an episode of Black Mirror.

As much as we like to tell ourselves that we are all unique creatures, the truth is that we as a species are pretty predictable.

With millions of years of evolution hardcoded into our DNA, it isn't hard to wrap your head around the fact that a machine could teach itself to speak and mimic us given enough raw data and memory. However, this dilutes the complexity of the situation. Machines may surpass us in computational arithmetic or chess, but it is much harder for a machine to accurately imitate social interactions without sticking out like a sore thumb.

GPT-3 may mimic spoken language on a terminal astonishingly well, but it's an entirely different ball game when speaking said language. Depending on

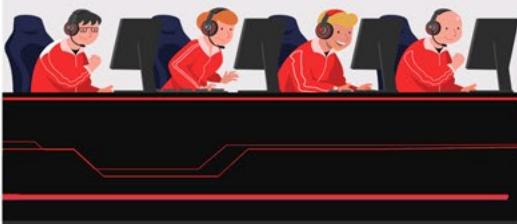
the context of what is being spoken, the voice inflections and tone is something that we might be able to mimic but, not a computer, at least not convincingly well. But we are making progress. Listening to how the Google Assistant speaks now compared to how the original voice assistant did a decade ago, the results are astonishing, albeit a little unnerving.

But wait! We haven't considered how the AI would have to change its audio frequencies to match the person it was imitating. Not only would this require an egregious amount of processing power and storage, but you would also have to get this prepared before the person expires or have an ungodly amount of data regarding the said person.

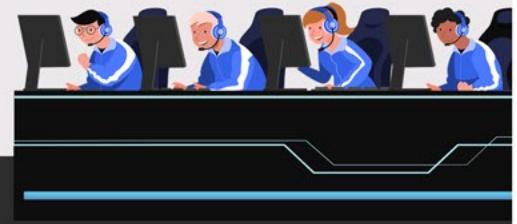
This only scratches the surface of the myriad of problems we would encounter in creating such technology. Needless to say, it would be unrealistic to expect such technology to be available for the common folks in the next 50 years or so.

Now let's suppose that, given enough time, we develop AI that can deepfake your deceased relative or friend and maintain a natural conversation with you in a style similar to them. We are still left with one question, should we be doing this?

An optimist would argue that imitating the dead could be excellent for people who never really



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got to say goodbye. It could provide closure to those who never had it. It could be used in various fields, such as education, to make history relatable (and bearable). A portal for children to interact with revolutionary thinkers and leaders (although deciding who is a revolutionary could be subjective and pertain to the creator's biases, which opens a whole new can of worms).

A pessimist might argue that there is no need to create such a situation. Humans have dealt

with death since the dawn of time. So why create such a colossal tear to the fabric of evolution? As a wise man once said, humans are great at creating solutions to problems, but we have terrible foresight to predict such problems. When plastics were introduced in the early 1950s, no one thought that this could turn into a giant unsolvable monster that would one day force us to drink out of soggy paper straws.

Death is a part of life. Trying to ignore that and creating an

illusion where the departed never really leave is a sticky situation. Consider the mental state of the person who is interacting with the AI. Our evolution as a species is dependent on us being able to move forward and learning from our past. Regardless, it is only a matter of time before we explore this uncertainty, just like we did with space exploration and medicine. Unlike Icarus, we have to be cautious not to fly too close to the sun. ☀️



Tejasri Eesala

BCS-2020

Who Knows



Who knew, this virus would enter into our lives,
Who knew, this was going to be so tough.

Who knew, a handshake would bring you troubles,
Who knew, that troubles would take over our smiles.

Who knew, there would be weeks of isolation,
Who knew, distance was the only solution.

Who knew, there would be a lockdown,
Who knew, this would take many lives down.

Who knew, the mask would become an accessory,
Who knew, it was worth your life if we miss in a hurry.

Who knew, being positive would become a crime,
Who knew, death would become punishment in no time.

Who knew, we would miss attending colleges like past 2015s,
Who knew, these distances might be worth it for our future 2030s.

Who knew, we might lose our dearest,
Who knew, this might teach some lessons at best.

Cheers to our new routine life,
Coz no one knows, when this ends!





It feels like it was a decade ago when everything was normal. When life was normal, when we had our usual routine. After a long tiring day going home, spending time with loved ones felt good. When a Sunday felt like a day of rest, a day when you could do the things you couldn't do on a weekday because of work pressure.

Through this piece, let's delve into the past two years of our life and our work from home experience. Life was on track for most of us - at least it had a routine back then. But nowadays, most people don't realize how time is passing. Added to this, there is a constant pressure that comes from within - "What have you done in these one and a half years or so?"

I am definitely not saying that everyone falls in this category. There are people who have indulged themselves in many activities or hobbies. The pandemic was a time for them when they had some quality time with their loved ones. But since I am a student, I will throw light from a student point of view.

At first, it was weird. Life came to a halt. But since there was no option back then, we adjusted, we had to. It was all fine at the start. Evenings were dedicated to family, where everyone came together. It felt like the good old times. But as time passed, and as you scrolled more and more

through social media, you had this fear of being unproductive. Everyone out there was doing something - this is what every other person thought.

I'll share how "The constant pressure of being productive" can be changed and improved. There will be times when you'll be doing well in your life, at your pace, but then all of a sudden, you'll be overwhelmed by what people are doing, what they have achieved, and you'll belittle everything you did until now.

We stop paying attention to what we can do, and instead, we spend our time thinking about what others have done. Even if we haven't done anything until now, it's never too late to start. We'll definitely reach somewhere if we start, but we'll stay in the same position if we just keep thinking. Someone who is way ahead of us also started someday and was in the same position as us at one point in time.

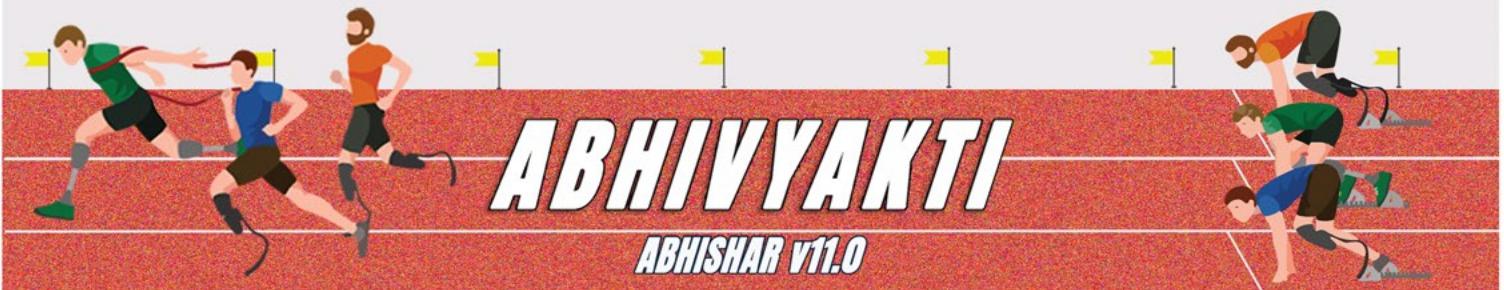
The initial step is the most difficult and requires a lot of strength. We have to get out of our comfort zone and start doing things, even if we aren't able to do them in the first go. We can't immediately excel at something we are new to. That will always be the most difficult step, and it needs patience.

Consistency is another thing. It's always better to know many things, but it's never good to put a lot on your plate simultaneously.

That way, we end up doing everything but nothing. You must have heard this idiom, "Jack of all trades, master of none". Well, it's always better to be a master of one.

Peer pressure is something that most of us have encountered. It has both positive and negative aspects. When working in a group, we can't procrastinate because if others are working on something, we will also start working. We might have ended up procrastinating if we were working alone. Peer pressure isn't always a bad thing. But like all things, it is equally important to look at the other side of the coin. When we know what we have to do, we still end up being confused because of peer pressure. It isn't easy to go in a different direction than your peers, but there is no harm in doing things the way you want to. Timing matters. You can't end up being in the same place or doing the same thing as everyone else. You should do things at your pace and at times when you want to.

So stop being disheartened if you're not able to do things at the same time that others are doing them. Stop and smell the roses. Start enjoying your small achievements, and soon you'll see you are somewhere where you always wanted to be. ☘





Yesoda Bhargava
IPG - 2009

PERSPECTIVES ON SOFTWARE THINKING

68

I was wondering what to write about this time for Abhishar. Should I write on some technical topic which is immediately relevant to students or something about life that might become relevant as they grow along with the flow of life? And then, I asked myself which theme they might be able to immediately understand and would resonate with. And then, I had my answer. Although my desire to write on the latter was too strong, the implication of talking about the former made me save the latter for some other day.

In this article, what I really want to do is not to send knowledge or fill your beautiful minds with some esoteric concepts, but in my own very little way, I attempt to show you a perspective. A perspective on Software Thinking. I will mostly be following a question-based approach so that while you are reading this piece (I hope it's worth your time), you engage in active reading and then ponder over what we hint at here.

Have you ever wondered, what is the difference between Software Engineering and Software Development? Are we trained to be software engineers or software developers? A clear understanding of both and their respective place in the entire discipline of creating something using technology would go a long way in shaping the way you think over a problem and later guide its

implementation.

Do you know the failure rate of software?

Well yes, of course, you would say that depends on the type of project: small, medium, complex projects. I will say you are absolutely correct. Before I tell you more about the figures, let us get the modern definition of success clear. While the traditional definition of success in software included OnTime, OnBudget, and OnTarget, the modern definition appends OnGoal, Value, and Satisfaction also. Now that we have a definition for success in perspective, it will be easier to relate to the software success percentages. According to the results from a study by Standish Group International, an IT research advisory firm, retail projects had the highest success rate at 35% using the Modern definition of success. The results also show that government projects had the highest failure rate at 24%, and financial and government projects had the highest challenge rate at 56%. Projects using a purchased application with no modification had the highest success rate at 57%. Projects that were developed from scratch using modern methodologies had a 23% failure rate. Agile projects have almost four times the success rate as waterfall projects, and waterfall projects have three times the failure rate as agile

projects. However, note that the smaller the project, the smaller the difference is between the agile and the waterfall process. So, if you have been paying attention to the numbers, you notice something. The success rate of government projects and those developed from scratch using modern technologies have almost similar failure rates. What do you think could explain this? What is so special about government projects? What are modern technologies? Then, projects using a purchased application with no modification have almost 57% percent of success rate. What does this tell you? What is so special about using purchased applications to develop projects? Your reflections on this question will help you obtain a bigger perspective related to software engineering in a world outside of your university. And it is critically important that you be familiar with this, while you are learning the fundamentals in the classroom.

Understanding the Problem
Even though the problems related to the success of software greatly depend on complex multiple issues, at the core, I believe it is related to insufficient understanding of the problem leading to its premature implementation. But you must argue back on this observation, for understanding a problem is an empirical process. Cultivating an understanding of

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anything is a gradual process, and the road is not always linear nor the time taken as we estimate. *Classroom theory is not a barrier or irrelevant, but if applied correctly through project-based learning, it will take you deeper into the core aspects of understanding a problem and thus strengthen the concepts of software engineering.* Therefore, whichever project you undertake in your time at IIIT Gwalior, group or individual, please spend time to understand, analyse and brainstorm over the problem. The goal shouldn't be to implement it unconsciously but to learn through it consciously the theory of software engineering.

Requirements Gathering

Normally, when we are working on creating some software-based solutions, we go through something called the "Requirements gathering" phase. This is often followed by requirements validation and then requirements management. Contrary to what you might think while working on your respective projects/problems, it is not an isolated process. So, discuss among your team members, or sometimes explain your project to outsiders (your siblings, friends in other fields, faculty members) and seek their perspective on the problems that you are solving. Then come back to your problem and work on it again, and refine the functional requirements of the system you are trying to develop. Post

that, gather feedback on them. You see, so much is at stake in this phase because it is based on requirements understanding that we develop a design for the solution and then move on to implementing it. So, what to do? Even though you are excited and enthusiastic to start coding immediately, pause and think. Sit with your problem and understand your approach to tackle it by understanding the functionalities that will tackle the problem.

Solution Design

The third aspect, and often not much discussed until very late in our lives, is the concept of software design. A poor design will immediately manifest when you are down to coding your solution. Suppose you are creating a simple Library Management System. Now even though you can very well codify your thinking and know how to implement individual functions (search, issue, return etc.), you must design your system using basic UML diagrams (Use-case, Class Diagram, Data Flow Diagrams) to really get more familiar with the functionality of your system, before you hit your IDE. Normally, I have seen freshers often say, "We can develop an app for this". By the time they are in their junior year they say, "We need to understand the problem properly". You see the difference? So, while working on your BTP, MTP projects or even subject projects, please sit and design your

solution. Because, in the middle of implementation, if you realize that something is not in place, it will be more costly to come back, rectify the design and then go back to implementing.

If you have been noticing and are a bit familiar with Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC), you may have picked up that what I have discussed above is nothing, but three phases of SDLC. For now, I will keep it short and urge you to really focus on these three. Coding and implementation, I am confident you have a really good grasp since you have been practicing. But imagine, how fruitful the solution would look like if you also train yourself in the above three aspects? Let me give you an example for this.

So, once I asked a bunch of classroom students to develop a mental health chatbot for users. Now, some of them added an authentication layer before the user could access the platform while others reasoned that, since the concern is of topmost importance, they really were not that bent on sign-up/registration, until at a later stage wherein it may be required. Now based on this distinction, definitely the design and thought-process may differ, although not much in the functionality of the system. Which approach is correct? We don't know; there are positive and negative perspectives on both. It really depends on what the end



goal is - giving a user-friendly platform to people to express themselves without worrying about identity disclosure or providing care but keeping some information about the user. Multiple factors come into play for this decision making - stakeholder thinking, customer opinions, technological methods etc.

Through that example, I hope I am able to slightly bring your attention to the three aspects discussed before. Universities are great places to strengthen fundamentals in SE and no better way than using the projects you do to learn that. Period. So, next time when you come across a situation wherein you are to develop something from scratch, try to see if thinking over the three things is contributing to your overall understanding of the project. If it does not really help you and you

can't be bothered, then leave it right there. But if you feel that it is helping to bring out the complexity in your mind outside then it would have been somewhat useful. Reach out to discuss, and gather feedback. That accelerates learning and positively impacts the depth of your understanding and critical thinking over a problem.

Lastly, I want to briefly touch on something more. After you have developed a project, presented it to your faculty, got an A grade, uploaded it on GitHub/LinkedIn and made a note of it in your CV, please GO BACK to your project. This time as a critic. Evaluate it. What have you got to lose now? Perhaps, now you are in a better position to look at it more objectively. As you do this, you will find ample scope for refining your solution - and from there

you move to a higher rung in the ladder of learning. You will be questioning your own development decisions as you do this, and that would be a deeply satisfying personal progress in a very potent manner. So, please do not forget your projects immediately after they have been officially over.

I believe this is the right time to stop, otherwise, I am in danger of losing your readership which I hold so dear. I hope these perspectives encourage you into thinking consciously while developing software-based solutions. If I can be of any help, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you. ✌️

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