**2. What does it mean to be a professional software developer, and why are you interested in becoming one?**

Not being aware that I had an aptitude for technology, I was pleasantly surprised when I learned how much I enjoy solving problems and how satisfying it is when the code I wrote worked. I found a passion for being a web developer. I know once I pass the hump of the learning curve, I can take pride in writing effective software solutions. I want to do this in a professional setting, as I would love to have mentors, thinkers, and problems solvers to work alongside of.

**3. What is something important you learned in the past year? How did you do it? What was the biggest challenge?**

I went into a full-time course to become a web developer. It was the single most challenging yet exhilarating experience that I went through this past year. The pace of the course taught me to manage my time better, to work late at night when it was quieter, to ask questions when I got stuck for more than 10 minutes on a problem, and of course to use various resources on the Internet efficiently. The most important lesson of all was to do the work! Understanding the logic was perhaps the most challenging part, however once the dust was settled it was a joy to crack the problem and get an elegant solution working.

**4. Describe a significant failure or setback. How did it happen? What do you wish you had done differently?**

The one significant failure or setback that comes to mind goes back to when I faced difficulties to find work in publishing industry in 2008. By then many magazines were folding and shutting their doors down. There was a hiring freeze with larger publishing companies. I knew I was qualified and I loved to work as an AD for magazines however there was a great economical setback and the fragile publishing industry was one of many that took a big hit.

What I should have done differently was to start working tech industry.

**5. [Optional] What personal projects have you been working on over the past few years? These can be technical and non-technical in nature.**

For the past two years, I have taken time from my career to focus full-time on my child who has ASD. The main objective during this period has been to create a great setting for him by surrounding him with proper therapy and tools to thrive. Being a digital designer, alongside of my work at home, I started my home-based small business creating websites with stunning design and powerful functionality. I worked closely with web developers to complete several projects and that is how I became interested in development. I started planning to jump back on the saddle with a renewed focus. I feel software development complements my artistic capabilities very well. I have a solid understanding that beautiful design is just as important as effective functionality, code modularity, robustness, and high performance when it comes to building software solutions, web-based or otherwise. Now I am ready, excited, and more than willing to start my next career phase in web development.