

The definition of 'power,' in my view, is the real measure of the ability to affect lives. It is the ability to destroy, but yet construct and the ability to exploit, yet protect. True power, in my eyes, is the ability to use power responsibly.

My deep understanding and resonance with the concept of power was an effect of my fascination towards breaking and fixing toys as a child. However, I only recognized my love for computing when my father introduced me to the world of penetration testing. As a result, my toys were replaced by vulnerable pieces of software and hardware. Resultantly, someday, I was trying to buffer overflow 'calc.exe,' other days cloning RFID cards. Slowly but surely, I recognized the power my skills had brought me. The introduction of the field to me was like a fork in the road, a fork which either led me to the path of crime and misdemeanor, or a path that could open a plethora of opportunities ahead. The path that threatened the privacy of others, or the path that protected it- the path I choose.

With the realization that it required an immense amount of knowledge to be something remotely close to an expert, I set to work by enrolling in as many computer-related courses as possible. I began at the age of twelve with a certification in C++, accredited by the ministry of education. In addition, I moved on to teaching myself various programming languages such as JavaScript, Python, Arduino Programming Language, and C. I also signed up for multiple online cybersecurity courses from open source forums like 'Cybrary.it' and others like 'Udemy.' Later on, I decided to enroll in internationally recognized courses such as CCNA, MCSE, and CEH. I read multiple books on similar topics, including 'advanced penetration testing' and 'Metasploit- a penetration testers guide.' These gave me a deep and detailed understanding of the cyberspace. My interest and inquisitiveness towards the subject grew with my knowledge, and I was enticed into spending more time on it as I learned new things.

As a proponent of power and a seeker of knowledge, I believe in the saying 'knowledge not shared is like knowledge wasted'. Thus, after gaining decent knowledge of the cyberspace, I started giving Network Security tuitions to computer science enthusiasts of my age. I taught them the basics of 'incident response' and mitigating known vulnerabilities in computer systems. To my surprise, I learned more by teaching than I had ever expected. With that, I also gained experience and understood the challenges faced by teachers on a daily basis. Later I used my skills to perform permitted penetration tests and vulnerability assessments on company websites to secure them. Rightfully so, I was mostly successful in securing their simple yet insecure architectures. This gave me the experience of what it is like to work as a security researcher in the mainstream and will stay with me for the rest of my professional life.

On another front, I have exhibited leadership qualities in school, being chosen as House Captain, Head of Fitness Club, and Head of the disciplinary sector of the school. Some of my other hobbies include solving the Rubik's cube and playing chess. To say the least, I, too, do possess a pronounced enthusiasm for fitness. I have achieved the 1st position award for intra-school Rubik's cube competition with a 17.6-second average and won the inter-house chess competition. In the realm of fitness, I have been awarded a Brown-1 in 'Karate Budokan'.

I believe security should be given utmost importance while simultaneously the least fear. I aspire to live in a world where credit card fraud is unsubstantial, a world where cyberbullying is non-existent, one where parents are not worried about their child's presence on the internet. This can only be fulfilled by expert-level knowledge in the field of Computer-Science and Information Security- my ultimate goal.

-Mohamed Yusuf