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THE POWER OF YES

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The Power of Yes

For the past year and a half, twice a week, I'd go play Afro-Brazilian drums in the portside city of Marseille in France. Two years ago, had you told me, an Indian living in India, that I shall be learning a new form of percussion in a city in Europe, I would have rolled my eyes. But here I was, learning and playing drums with a bunch of beautiful people who share my joy and passion for percussion.

In 2013, when my husband was offered an onsite position from his company in Bangalore, we didn't know how long the duration would be. It would be the second time we'd be shifting base outside India for his work, the second time I'd be resigning from my job as a content editor to be able to travel with him. I know a lot of couples who decide to split for this time period so that each of them can individually devote time to their careers. I wasn't sure I knew what I was doing.

When I chose to resign and move to France where my husband was to work from, many a pair of eyelids were batted. We are forever at the receiving end of remarks that hint at our lack of desire to not work and just have fun at the spouse's expense. Fun?! Try spending 18 hours a day in a new place, with no one familiar to help you initiate your new life. Thank god for the internet, free downloads, epub versions of books, and your own pair of healthy feet!

The life of an expat's wife is a myriad of experiences, high and low. I guard my solitude fiercely and I don't know 'small talk' and wouldn't know the first thing about chatting with other wives in similar positions as mine. Fortunately, I love to hang out with people. I got in touch with the local Indian association and performed Bharatanatyam at an Indian festival, within a month of our arrival. I said yes to starting dance classes, said yes to teaching Hindi to a 56-year old Argentinean who teaches Spanish at school and knows 13 other languages, said yes to filling in for him to teach English to a bunch of retired ladies...and thereby increased my wealth of amazing moments, those which I will cherish forever. When we left Marseille to head back to India, two years had flown by doing these seemingly 'zero-gain' activities that enriched my life.

That is the power of a simple 'yes'. We do not know what awaits us. Sure, we risk failure. But so what?! What awaits us when we refuse something is nothing. It's easy to say no and close the door on opportunities we never knew we had. Allowing ourselves the choice of new experiences offers change from the routine we find ourselves in, even if it's just for a few hours. Finding something to do is not difficult these days. Join a book club, a hobby class, spend a true, organic hour with your kid; do anything and gift yourself those few hours of love. It's beyond anything you will experience and it's not something money can buy.

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