

Tendrils of Thought

[RSS](#) [ARCHIVE](#)

Penned by Bharath

[FacebookGroup](#) [PreviousBlog](#) [Disclaimer](#)

JANUARY 30, 2012

Finally, I'm an Author

I have just received confirmation that a portion of my work that I did back in IIT Bombay contained in a paper submitted to the WWW2012 has been accepted. I read the acceptance email and the attached reviews with detached emotions and mixed feelings. All along, I had a wry smile on my face. I spoke briefly, to Sashi and we congratulated each other for our respective efforts.

And yes, I'm now called an author. To be called an author, (doesn't matter if you are the fourth author of an obscure technical publication that will be hardly read by a handful of people in the entire world), to be called an author, an author of anything at all, is a good (read great) feeling.

Times may change; my bank balance will never remain the same. I told myself, as soon as I kept the phone down, I will never encounter these beautiful moments again. Come what may, I deserved this, I told myself I was going to enjoy this, howsoever I can. I walked into a Baskin Robbins outlet all alone (no needless distractions) and treated myself to a double scoop Banana split; it cost more than 200 rupees, but I scarcely cared. The acceptance of the paper was a success and I was perfectly entitled to feel happy about it, despite everything, despite every **damn** thing.

Yet, the announcement has come too little, a little too late. Yes, I have received credit for a portion of the work that went into the paper. But, the times in IIT Bombay, seem more like images from a half-remembered, incoherent dream. My life and I have mercifully moved on. IITB, with each passing day, seems more like a skeleton in the closet that I really don't want to let out. I have absolutely nothing to do with web search now and I would prefer it would remain that way - at-least for the next few years, if not forever.

The announcement did make me think, though. The work was effectively done during the last two months of my stint in IIT Bombay. In front of us, were the charred remains of computer systems in a burnt-up lab; we were unsure when it would come back up online, if at all. I was flatly refused a large portion of work-related knowledge transfer that I needed, desperately, for my work to proceed, on the grounds of personal enmity. I was facing a number of rejections from a number of individuals and corporations. Not to mention the almost constant, incessant deluge of disparaging remarks about my analytical ability, my birth, my upbringing, my death and my programming skills from my advisor. My career in research, for all practical purposes had seemed finished.

And now, 6 months later, there is some gratification, if not a distant light at the end of the tunnel. It's not that I did something significant. Our paper will most likely be nothing but a small foot-note in the history of the Internet. My contribution to that foot-note is even smaller. But whatever insignificant portions of research I did do, to contribute to the work, I did it with my backs to the wall – perhaps that has been the most gratifying aspect of the whole thing. I did not get bogged down and fought back with whatever I could muster.

The result has taught me three things – no big deal, just three simple life lessons to carry forward.

First is the value of enthusiasm and purpose. If you are really enthusiastic about what you really do, if you have a purpose however faint, then the work is going to lead you somewhere. It doesn't matter what others say or how much they try to hinder your progress. Your enthusiasm and purpose will make you achieve things.

Secondly, I believe more in the value of “perseverance” than ever before. There is a need to keep working, a need to keep resisting, a need to keep trying harder, even when all hope is lost. If you keep doing it, some form of success will come, eventually.

6/26/2014

Tendrils of Thought - Finally, I'm an Author

Thirdly, now I have found the humility to accept that I can never do things on my own. There is great value in teamwork. Sashi and I walked into a burnt server room, filled with black, dirty soot and we both emerged out clean on the other side. My toastmasters mentor told me – “*Only when you get dirty for the sake of someone else, you are actually going to clean yourself up, paradoxical though it may seem*”. I have realized, when you are actually working in a team, working for someone else who is struck, you invariably accrue some benefits to yourself.

To end on the same note, it is unlikely I will ever get to work the same amazing group of people, I was fortunate to interact with, in IIT Bombay. The vultures that work with me now, never even come close. I just want to thank each and every one of them for teaching me more about life and broadening my perspective; I only wish that they taught me a bit of web search too, along the way.

2:08PM | URL: <http://tumblr.co/Zba1uwFcbPD7>

FILED UNDER: [just saying philosophy](#)

RSS feed: <http://bharathb.in/rss>

[PREVIOUS POST](#) [NEXT POST](#)

Search

Theme is [The Atlantic](#) by [Peter Vidani](#) for [Tumblr](#).