## TINY

**MINDS**

###### **B.M NAMAZI**

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# **The derailed American young man**

Tom Hawkins was thrilled to inform his parents about his selection into the U.S army. However, his parents, Dr. Hawkins, a surgeon, and Dr. Leeta ,a gynecologist did not share their son’s enthusiasm and had to work hard to hide their true emotions for his sake. They had wanted their only son to follow in their footsteps and take care of their hospital, Hawkins Health Care in L.A.

‘It’s going to be just training for the first 6 months and I will have to be away from both of you.’ , Tom said.

‘That’s O.K, we are going to be fine. As long as this is your true passion, you won’t be facing any problems.’, his mother encouraged him.

And with a promise to his parents to keep them updated about his achievements in the army, Tom left for the training camp. He was exultant doing his training as he bettered most of his batch mates.

After finishing his initial training, he decided to give his parents a call to deliver the great news.

Tom: Dad, I have been selected to go to Iraq.

Dr. Hawkins: It feels really good to hear that , son. So, is there a provision you can opt for Baghdad at a later stage?

Tom: No can do. It’s a decision already taken by the U.S army.

Dr Hawkins: Well, in that case, Good Luck!

After 3 months in Iraq, Tom got positioned in the city of Basra. Without any direct assignment, he was put in Unit-III, which was responsible for military attacks on the city. Unit-III members had to maintain law and order in the city. They were exceptions to the Geneva treaty and could shoot and kill anyone whom they thought to be in the suspicion category.

Tom was enthusiastic and energetic about his new job, to keep the city of Basra under control. His first day began with the murder of a group of 5 people in the market place and the recovery of bombing materials from the site, convinced Tom that a major assault on the city by bombing the market place was thwarted. This gave Tom the ego-boost he required and that day onwards, not a single day passed without Tom shooting at least a quadruple of people. Tom seemed to find killing - a pilgrimage to the fountain of youth. For him, the cries from the relatives of the deceased seemed to be a musical extravaganza. Still, being an Orthodox Catholic , he did not kill any of the Basrian Christians. Besides, shooting Christians will most likely invoke the wrath of the locals as well as the U.S army. The death of Muslims on the other hand was never questioned. After nearly 2 months, Tom himself was responsible for the killing of more than 200 Mohammadeens, but, he never had to go through any interrogations.

Basically, Tom enjoyed his new life as he could kill anybody, anytime, anywhere without having to answer questions. He couldn’t imagine this situation in his motherland even when he was losing all the virtue his parents had instilled in him since his infant days.

One day when Tom was just lazing around in his office, Lieutenant Hayden, an army officer under his supervision reported to him with the latest updates. According to him, a boy aged 9 ,named Mohammad Fatah, wanted to meet Tom. Hayden further added that the boy was let in only after a thorough inspection as per their norms. Tom who was curious to know what the 9-year old wanted, asked for him and ordered Hayden to stay as a translator between the Arabic and English speakers.

The boy entered. But, when a smiling Tom wished him ‘Good Morning’, the boy just acknowledged it with a lift of his hand and an expressionless face which would grow to haunt Tom in the last few moments of his life. Anyways, Tom did his level best to strike a useful conversation with the boy.

‘Hey, what brings you here?’. Hayden translated that to Fatah.

The boy replied with a horrific plea, ’Please, save me by killing me.’

Unsurprisingly, Tom was shocked. ’Hey, what do you think? We are from the U.S army. We do not kill innocent civilians. If you want death, you better go find a way to suicide.’

The boy pleaded, ’Sir, you have to understand my situation. You and your army have killed my father, my mother, my two elder siblings and my uncle. So, it’s not like I have anyone in this world who pines for my existence. Besides, because of you my drunkard father will go to heaven as enemies of his motherland has killed him and let him bleed for his native land. So, basically he has become a *shuhadah*, who will enter heaven without any questioning, according to the tenants of our religion. In the beginning, when the Americans started killing off my brethren one by one, I thought of taking revenge on you, but, now that I have learnt of the benefits of dying for your nation, I have come to you so that you will kill me and I can join my relatives in heaven.’

Hearing the translated version from Hayden shocked Tom to the very core of his existence. He became violent and took out his revolver and screamed for the boy to be taken away. Hayden had to drag a crying Fatah, who was shouting, ‘Kill me, please……please. I want to join my parents in heaven.’

As Hayden was dragging Fatah away from the Unit, he heard a gun being fired and rushed back into the room only to find a dead Tom in a pool of blood. Hayden, alone, knew the reasons for Tom’s suicide as he went outside with a mission to kill a 9 year old boy.

# **Image Management can take you a long way**

Rohan had returned to Bangalore after a long absence of 15 years. He had had previous experiences in the city during his school days when he studied for 3 years from 7th-9th grade in Saint Johns International School. This school had changed Rohan from a meek little kid to a self-actualized guy by making him more expressive and communicative.

He had once known Bangalore like the back of his hand and his body wandered through the city his mind was taking a route through memory lane. His 7th grade days were full of misery. He never understood what others were trying to communicate to him, but, he never responded due to his inadequacy when it came to languages. He kept on failing in English and Hindi. His father arranged for tuitions and forced him to endure excessive training. By the end of the year there was a great improvement.

In 8th grade he felt more comfortable in class, made more friends, became an active participant of co-curricular activities and was able to top his class in academics. The change was so sudden that even he felt it extraordinary. His fears of never being fluent in a language seemed so silly now.

In 9th grade, there were some student exchange programs and most of the students in his batch were new and he honed his lately attained skills to develop more friends. Rohan also got more interested in cricket. And, down the memory lane, he met three girls – Anju David, Anjali Singh and Anaz Rias who were his classmates in ninth grade. For Rohan, these best friends were the most important aspect of his class. They were always happy, charming, and jovial and made the whole class vibrant and energetic.

After a few more stops along the memory lane, he came back to reality. As Rohan was walking across the floors of Garuda mall, he saw a familiar face in the boutique store at the corner. He ran to her and realized that she looked just as beautiful as he remembered.

‘Hey Anjali, how come you are here? What have you been doing all these years?’ asked an exuberant Rohan.

‘Who the hell are you and how do you know my name?’

said Anjali.

‘Don’t you remember me? I am Rohan Zakariya. We went to SJIS together during 9th grade’.

‘I am sorry, but I can’t seem to remember you.’

‘It’s ok. We just studied for one year together and it’s pretty normal for you to forget me. So how are your friends Anas and Anju doing? Asked Rohan.

‘They got married and have settled down with their families.’ said Anjali.

Afterwards they talked about their mutual friends and when it was time to leave Anjali gave Rohan her number.

And after that meeting Rohan realized that Anjali had remembered every one of their classmates except him. And understood that his image management was not proper.

As he left the store he made a firm decision to uphold his image at all times.

# 

# **Familial Devotion**

Balaji was in an upbeat mood that day while returning from office. There was genuine reason for that too. The company had selected him to represent the company at an official three day conference in Belgium-his first international tour. When he broke the news to his wife, Lakshmi, broke into tears. He didn’t understand her reason for crying. He had never liked to see his wife cry and had made a promise that he would never make her unhappy.

Balaji and Lakshmi lived in the temple city of Madurai. Their fathers were teachers in a Govt. school in Madurai. So they were family friends and used to visit each other often when they were kids. Lakshmi was the most beautiful girl in his city and Balaji had an eye on her during his schooldays. But she never had any such ideas in her mind.

Balaji passed out as the school as the school topper and got admitted to IIT Chennai. Lakshmi who passed 12th after four years also got admitted into a college nearby. Balaji used to get all information about Lakshmi through his cousin Murali who was also in Lakshmi’s college. Being the most beautiful girl in college, many guys were after her. But she never showed any interest in them. She had decided that her choice of a husband would be a guy chosen by her parents.

Balaji got placed in Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and was enjoying his official life. But his mind was always on Lakshmi. He never conveyed his feelings to Lakshmi or anyone. But he was confident that he would be able to get Lakshmi as his partner. He never bothered to do anything to get her. The main reason for this was the traditional approach of his family.

Murali kept informing Balaji of her progress in studies and also her marriage proposals. Her parents were trying for a doctor and one or two had visited them.

Hearing this information from Murali, Balaji lost hope in Lakshmi. Days passed. Until, one day Balaji got a call from his mother saying Lakshmi’s father had come to their house and had talked about a marriage proposal. Balaji could not believe it.

He had said ‘Just accept it. No more talk on it.’ They had gotten married in a few months. And, it was during their wedding that Lakshmi’s eyes had been filled with tears and Balaji made that promise.

Lakshmi knowing that her cousin’s marriage was on the same Saturday that Balaji had to go to Belgium realized that she could not go to that wedding without him. Balaji upon hearing the reason called up his boss immediately and informed about his personal commitment and non-availability for the foreign tour.

Balaji hoped that the tears would stop and that he would never have to see her in tears ever again.

# **Football and culture**

Ahmed Daudi, the best footballer of Africa, could not resist the offer from the French club, Francia 21. He discussed the offer details with his wife, Farzia Habib.

Farzia told him, ‘I don’t mind coming with you to Paris. But, you should never ask me to change the way I dress, I live and I pray.’

‘Hey, come on, France is one of the most liberal countries of the world. You can live as you like. You can always wear your burqa. That’s not an issue at all.’

‘Then, it’s OK. I don’t like the modern culture and western behavior. But, I will come with you.’

And, so half the hurdles were cleared. Ahmed discussed the issue with his parents. His father advised him, ‘Be a Muslim and live like a Muslim. Insha Allah, you will be successful.’

Finally, all the hurdles were cleared. Ahmed’s family reached Paris and began their new lives in the apartment sponsored by the club. The kids were admitted into nearby schools. And, as there were quite a few Algerians living in their neighbourhood, Farzia felt comfortable and enjoyed her stay. Ahmed played exceptionally well and his photos were plastered across the sports pages of various French dailies.

But, soon they started facing problems. Sarkozy had started some unfamiliar reforms targeting Muslims and this worried Farzia to no end. She turned to Ahmed for consolation, ‘Will I have to forgo my hijab?’

‘No, it won’t become a reality. You don’t have to worry about that. Every week about hundreds of French Catholics are getting converted to Muslims. That’s why he is passing laws like this to annoy us, Mohammadeens. Just stop worrying, alright?’

‘OK. But if the situation worsens, you do understand that I will have to leave Paris.’

‘Hey, if that’s the case, we will leave this place together.’

Eventually, Sarkozy passed the law and banned women from wearing the burqa. Farzia, not being an ardent newspaper reader, was not aware of the law being finally passed. And so, the next day, Farzia went to the school to take her kids back home. But that was not to be as she got dragged away by the French policemen. Her husband had to go the police station and pay the fines to get her released.

Farzia was devastated. ‘You told me the French were liberal’ ,she told her husband, ‘Yet, they don’t let me wear my burqa. I thought they were supposed to be educated, well-mannered and good people. How can these people who do not give me the freedom to express myself be good people?’

Ahmed said, ‘These laws are basically a product of their frustration. Anyways, it’s not like we don’t have other options.’

That week itself they landed in Algeirs and Ahmed started playing for his country again. Farzia was just really happy to be somewhere were she could express herself in her own way.

# 

# **Success goes hand in hand with concentration**

Joy had just taken the bus to his friend’s place in Tambaran. His friend, Mallikeran , had rented an apartment near the junction away from the college so that he is not disturbed by the students of the college. Both of them were actually doing their M.Tech in machine designing. Mallikeran being a very studious guy, used to work as a lecturer before joining his M.Tech. Joy, on the other hand, was working as a mechanical engineer at Carpel Chemicals Ltd. He kept taking night shifts and attended classes whenever possible. Thus, he was not usually updated with his classes. But, due to his constant interaction with his classmates, he had the required info to keep himself moving.

As they were chatting away about non-trivial stuff, Mallikeran asked, ‘So did you prepare for today’s test?’

‘What test?’

‘The one on Structural Designs.’

‘Come on! No one told me about that.’

‘Sorry, I thought you knew about that. It was announced some two weeks ago. But, there is only one chapter to go through. And, it’s only at 11 a.m. You have more than enough time to prepare.’

‘Just get the damn book.’ Joy ordered his partner.

Mallikeran did try to help his friend. ’Calm down. It’s just one topic, you should be able to nail it. You just need to go through the problems.’

Mallikeran started teaching Joy the basic concepts. Joy focused his attention completely on the topic at hand to get the concepts right.

‘Joy, just read this. I need to take a bath.’,Mallikeran said.

Joy did not waste any time and kept on reading. He thought only of the concepts in the book and tried jam everything into his head. And, he seemed to be understanding the concepts properly.

‘Joy, it’s time. We need to get going.’ Mallikeran said after finishing his bath.

After going down the stairs, they boarded an auto to get to the college. Joy opened the book and asked his friend to tell him what he could on the subject matter. In the 15 minutes auto ride, Mallikeran kept explaining things while Joy kept nodding his head.

As Joy was not really prepared, he did not worry much and took the exam in his stride. The questions were direct, simple and easy. Joy could answer most of the questions as everything was still fresh in his mind. He was exultant that he could write an exam with so much confidence after just an hour of preparation. After the exam, Joy thanked Mallikeran for his help.

The next week, they got their answer sheets back. Joy had gotten 87 while Mallikeran had only managed to get 84 marks. Joy felt sorry for Mallikeran because he felt that he should not have scored more than his studious friend. But, Mallikeran had just smiled at Joy when they got their answer sheets and that smile seemed to say it all.  **The beating of your heart for your brethren**

Durai Raj had completed his instrumentation engineering from Anna University and got placed at Aakash Refineries Ltd.,Cuddalore. For the past 5 years, he had been working as an instrumentation engineer. Being a very hardworking man with great communication skills and a well-mannered attitude, he was in everybody’s good books.

Although, he was active and happy in his official life, he kept feeling like he still had ways to go. As a representative of the Nadar community, the fact that his brethren were not represented properly in the development processes of the country, held his attention. The profits of liberalization and globalization were evading his society. He was traumatized to see that when others were literally benefitted by the modern era, the Nadars were still in the dark ages with no one to guide them, no one to help them, but with everybody to suppress them. The per capita income of most members of his community were one-third of their required expenditure and 70% of them were below the poverty line. They had no satisfactory representation in the secondary or tertiary sectors.

Durai did not understand why when everybody was speaking of inclusive growth , it meant the development of all except the Nadars. He knew that he could not do anything on his own to bring these inequalities to the forefront. So, like many others before him he decided to leave the matter and put his mind to rest.

But, the news of suppression of his own family members in all fronts kept haunting him day in and day out. He finally decided to follow his wife’s example as she was just worried about the well-being of her husband and kids. But, in reality , she was worried about the Nadars. She didn’t bother about it as she felt like she couldn’t do anything about it. Durai , on the other hand , could not follow up with his wife.

His wife advised, ‘Your mind should be where your body is!’

‘What do you mean?’ he asked.

‘I meant what I said. You are with me and the kids now. Stay with us. You shouldn’t let your mind wander to thoughts that you should have no contact with.’

‘The Nadar blood flows through our veins. How can I ignore the beating of my heart when I see all the attacks on Nadars shown on TV?’ he asked his wife, Dhanalekshmi.

‘Just sitting around worrying about the future isn’t going to help anyone. I know that I’m not really good with public attention. But, you on the other hand are quite capable of owning the spotlight. Maybe, it’s time to start our own movement- a social one.’

Durai understood the seriousness of her talk.

‘Of the 200 engineers in the company, I’m the only Nadar. So basically, there isn’t much chance of a revolution there.’ he said subdued.

‘So what?’, his wife continued , ‘The communities which represent 5% of the population enjoy almost 50% representation in your company. And, that is an exemplary example of how the minorities enjoy more power because of the inequalities in education and wealth. The Nadars are not dying here. But, they get to do only menial jobs and have to remain in the lower strata of the society. Why don’t you look at this from another angle? Look at the Nadar woman and the Nadar kids in your family. Would you let us suffer by going off to start some revolution which you have no guarantee will succeed?’

‘You know what? Out of all the things you just said, the last part kind of made sense. I guess I can’t make all the Nadars in my country happy, and, maybe I should just focus on making you guys happy.’ Durai said with a troubled mind.

**Perseverance helps you a lot**

Sohail had just finished his B.Tech in mechanical engineering and had come to Mumbai to write an entrance test to the National Petrochemicals Ltd. When he entered the examination hall, he was surprised to see most of his friends there too. And, right after the exam all of the former classmates hung out and everybody was in a jovial mood. By the time, everyone wanted to head back home, Sohail came up with his proposal. He thought that it would be a great idea if all of them could stay back and look out for a job. But, none of them fancied staying back in unknown surroundings. So they all left Sohail who was determined to find a job.

Sohail had with him only a meager amount of luggage and just the 2000 rupees his father had entrusted in him. So he needed to find a place to stay at a moderate fee. And, luckily he ran into the World University Centre in the city where they were allowing students to stay at minimal payment and with his college ID card, Sohail got himself a roof over his head.

After he refreshed himself in his newly found abode. He went out with three goals in his mind: to get photocopies of his resume, to call his parents and to enjoy a true Marathi supper. He found a nearby shop were he could take photocopies and a god restaurant were he enjoyed a hearty meal.

As he was walking along the main road, he finally found an STD booth run by an old man in his sixties. But, as the queue was quite long he decided to strike a conversation with the owner as something about the way he behaved with his customers appealed to him.

‘Hello,Uncle. How is the business going?’

‘Well the business is going great! What brings you here? You look like a Malayali.’

Sohail chatted away with the man for another whole hour as it felt good to talk with someone who was genuinely interested in you. He told the booth owner, who introduced himself as Menon, about his current predicament. Menon advised him to try his luck at the Zain Industrial Estate. Sohail followed his advice but it was to no avail as some managers were not even interested in any kind of correspondence.

As the days kept trickling by, Sohail started losing his self-confidence. And blow after blow kept striking him. The results of his entrance test came and despite his efforts and intelligent brain, he did not pass. And, after just a week or so, the receptionist at the lodge at the WUC told him that he will have to vacate his room to make rooms available for the students who will be coming to join TISS in the next semester.

He finally set up his abode at Menon’s place and together the two of them were determined to find Sohail a job. Finally, they met up with one of Menon’s old contacts, Mr.Krishnan Kuroop. He was glad to give Sohail a job as his hardworking nature endeared him. Ultimately, Sohail completed his mission and led a decent and respectable life.

Anyways, **Alls Well That Ends Well.**

# 

# **Parenting is difficult**

Reju Paul, a mechanical engineer and his wife, Malini, a civil engineer were settled in Bengaluru. Both of them were enjoying their official lives as well as their familial lives with their kids, Naheem and Sara. The two kids were excellent in studies and always stood first in their respective classes of fifth and fourth.

When, one day, Reju got a letter from Axiom Data Ltd., little did he know that it would make him shift to Chennai as it was a job offer with almost four times his current salary and various other allowances. Even, Malini couldn’t resist the job offer as it really was a good one. She left her current job in Bengaluru and decided to find a new one in Chennai. But, the fact that they will have to find a new school for the kids, worried the parents as they didn’t want their kids to be subjected to a whole new atmosphere. They felt new surroundings will affect the children’s education. But, they eventually decided to tackle the problems one by one.

With mixed feelings in their hearts, they relocated to Chennai. They travelled by the train, while their goods were transported by the Parcel Service Agency of the new company.

Their new house was a huge villa in the heart of the city. The kids were admitted into schools recommended by the company. Malini got a new job in Chennai. And, things in general were going so smooth that the transition did not make any visible difference in their lives. But, as always, the worst was yet to come.

After 3 months, the results of the kids’ quarterly-exams were announced. And, that devastated the parents as the kids failed to be the toppers in their classes for the first time.

Reju asked Malini to not scold their kids. He told her, ‘We should plan something. Let’s see whether it works. As of now, why don’t you just sign their report cards and appreciate them for the effort they put in despite the new atmosphere.’

Reju racked his brains for many plans to bring out the best in his kids. Finally, he got his much needed brain-wave. On one of their family day outs, when all of them were at the mall shopping, Reju went and bought a colouring book and a puzzle book without the others knowing about it. The next day, after the kids had gone to their school, he took out the new books. He opened the puzzle book and on the first page, he started writing-

***Dear Naheem,***

***Good day to you. I present this puzzle book to you so that you will become the best in your class. If I find your grade point average improving, you can definitely expect more gifts from me.***

Just then he saw the names ‘Brittas’ and ‘Mohammed’ flash across the news on T.V. So, instead of signing the note with his own name, he signed it as ***‘Mohammed Brittas’***. Similarly, on the colouring book he wrote another note for Sara, and again signed it as ***‘Mohammed Brittas’***.

Reju dropped both the books on the verandah and left for work. That night, when he returned from his office, his kids ran upto him. He could see real sparkling energy in his childrens’ eyes as they went rambling about the mysterious ‘Mohammed Brittas’. Reju felt like his masterplan was indeed giving him the desired results. Even Malini, could see the change in Naheem and Sara as they were studying very seriously.

She asked him with a wink, ’You wouldn’t know who this Mohammed Brittas is, will you?’. He smiled and that smile seemed to answer her questions.

After a fortnight, Reju dropped another pair of books and in his notes to the kids, he wrote about things that had happened to them over the past few weeks. The kids , then , started looking up to this Brittas guy as a secret Santa Claus who was always watching over them. They kept working hard to impress their own personal secret Santa.

Finally, when the results of the half-yearly exams came, Naheem and Sara were ,once again, the toppers in their respective classes.

So basically, for any problem there’s always an easy and simple solution. Reju understood this fact, and worked out solutions neatly to get the desired results. And, he is someone anybody would call as – The Modern Indian Parent!

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# **Attitudes define people**

Shanmugam Sundaram was on sunday duty in the general shift in the Maintenance Dept. of National Refineries Ltd., Vishakapatnam. Though a Tamilian, he was in the good books of his colleagues, subordinates and supervisors. He had also become fluent in Telugu. His good communication skills and hardworking nature had earned him a good reputation in the company.

Just then, his boss called him over the phone and the conversation went somewhat like this.

Boss: Mr. Sundaram, I had given you 6 hours for the renewal of the gear box and putting it back in line. How is the work going on now?

Shanmugam: It’s going great. I think I will be able to finish the work on time.

Boss: You better be able to finish it, you of all people should know what exactly is at stake.

Shanmugam: Yes, sir. I’ll get on it right away, sir.

After ending the call, he mobilized all the resources- including manpower, chain blocks, slings, and other tools and also his most trustworthy subordinate – Veli. He ordered Veli to open the top cover and inspect the gear box before taking it for replacement.

But, Veli replied, ’Sir, it was inspected by Mr. Chandran only yesterday. And, he recommended for the replacement of the gear box, why should we again waste time on another inspection, especially considering the limited time frame’

Nevertheless, Shanmugam insisted and Veli left for the inspection. Shanmugam retuned to his routine jobs and after abut 45 minutes he got a call from Veli informing him that the gear box did not actually need a replacement.

According to Veli, ‘The non-drive end was slightly dislocated, but that had been corrected now. And, the oil was drained and filled.’ Hearing the good news, he asked Veli to tell everybody to take a good long rest. He then went to the site and found the gear box running smoothly and consuming only the required power. At about 12:30, he got another call from his boss.

He expected the call to be full of praises and admiration for his quick wit and intelligence, as he had successfully thwarted a complete replacement of the gear box. But, it didn’t turn out to be so as his boss yelled at him for trying to be oversmart and accused him for deliberately trying to outdo the company’s resources. Unsurprisingly, he was upset as he recognized a jealous undertone in his boss’s voice because he was the one who had thwarted the full replacement and not his boss.

On his way back to his office, he came across Veli, who was trying to assemble a pump. He was , undoubtedly, shocked as Veli was supposed to be taking a rest. And, the over-zealous Veli said that he couldn’t take a moment’s rest inside the company as he felt that since the company was paying him, he had to earn his wages rightfully.

Back in his office, Shanmugam pondered over his boss’s attitude and Veli’s attitude. But, he couldn’t let these thoughts continue, so he let go of them and resumed his usual work.

# 

# **Family should always come first**

Anil Warrier, the most energetic and enthusiastic engineer in his company, was to represent his boss in the most crucial half-yearly meet. He was extremely happy to grab this chance as he considered it to be a once in a lifetime opportunity.

It was Anil who gave all the required data to Mr. Deshpande in the most precise and accurate manner. He was satiated to have a subordinate like Anil under him. But, he saw to it that he represented the department at all levels and never gave Anil any exposure to the management as his technical and professional skills worried his boss. Anil, liked the way he was treated, and he did not want to rush things or own the spotlight. Still, at times, the fact that he had to report to a man who was not even as qualified or competitive as him, worried him to no end.

The day before the half-yearly meet, Mr. Deshpande was drilling stuff into Anil’s head. ‘So Anil, you should be well prepared with the reports and the data. Nobody should be able to question us on any matter. The Board members will be present at the presentation and you have to do it well.’, Mr. Deshpande was saying.

Anil who was confident in his own capabilities kept his cool and said, ‘I’ll try my level best, sir.’

‘On Thursday, you have to do the presentation at the regional level. This will be the first time I’m going to miss that meeting in the past 35 years.’ ,Mr. Deshpande continued, ‘But, family should always come first and I have to help my daughter with her board exams.’ Anil was surprised to hear these words from his boss. But, he didn’t let his surprise show on his face. Mr. Deshpande left with the words, ‘You should keep me updated, I’ll always be available on my phone.’

Anil did not leave the office right away, he stayed back and worked on his presentation eventhough it was complete in all respects. He got additional details, added more slides and made it look more lively. Finally, when he was happy with his work , he checked his phone and was bewildered to find five missed calls from his pregnant wife. He didn’t call her back as he knew it will only take him about ten minutes to get back home.

When he reached home, he was greeted with the sad face of Tamanna Warrier. She was two-months pregnant and due to her uncontrollable stomach aches, she had stopped going for work. She told him, ’Anil, the pain is becoming unbearable. It’s not the usual small aches. I feel like it’s something big, that’s why I called you many times. Why didn’t you pick up your phone?’

‘Sorry dear, I was busy with my presentation. Do you think I should take you to the hospital?’ ,Anil asked.

But, Tamanna being the dutiful wife she was, did not want to stress Anil right before his big event and told him she was fine and that it was just a false alarm. Anil knew she was pretending to be fine and wanted to take his wife to the hospital. But, he knew that if he did and the doctors admitted her, he would not be able to attend the meet the next day. So, he put the assignment of looking after his wife on hold.

Tamanna increased the dosage of her usual painkillers, but, she was pretty uncomfortable the whole night and didn’t get any sleep at all. Nevertheless, she saw to it that she did not wake Anil up. The next day, Anil arranged for food, so that she won’t have to worry about cooking, and then left for his office. The whole day, Tamanna’s stomach pain kept increasing and she knew that something terrible was going on in her stomach. She took the phone to call Anil, but, after a moment’s thought, she kept the receiver back.

Meanwhile, Anil was on cloud nine at his company, as he was received with happy faces wishing him good luck with his presentation. He made last minute checks and everything was running smoothly. Just before the presentation, he called his wife.

‘Hey, sweetheart. How are you now? The pain is decreasing, right? Everything is gonna be fine, just take a lot of rest and don’t try to do anything and you’ll be able to give birth to a beautiful boy as you wish in a few months.’

‘Anil, I am not really sure about that. But, lets hope for the best. How is your presentation coming up?’

‘It’s going great. Everyone seems to really like it. I’m sorry about not being there for you, but, you should know that I would have taken you to the hospital if this was any other day.’

‘I know that, Anil. It’s O.K, I’m gonna be fine. Anyways, best of luck with your presentation.’

And with those last words, Tamanna ended the call and went back to her suffering while Anil was at the peaks of his glory. As the pain became more and more unbearable, she started thinking of other alternatives. And so, she decided to call her parents.

‘Hi, Ma. It’s me. I was thinking maybe that …..you and Papa would like to come stay me for sometime as I was staying at home anyways.’

‘Oh, dear. We would love to come, but its your cousin Avantika’s wedding tomorrow and if we miss that your Aunt Sita will sell us to the butchers, you know that, don’t you? How is the baby coming along? Is Anil taking good care of you?’

‘The baby’s doing great. And, Anil’s really helping me out with stuff.’

‘Well, that’s good. He better be taking good care of you. I have to go get everything ready for tomorrow, so how about I call you back later.’

‘O.K. Bye,Ma.’

After this conversation, Tamanna was disappointed that her own mother had not recognized the desperate undertone in her voice. She thought that maybe it was time for her to take things into her own hands. But, when she thought of going to the hospital without Anil by her side, she scratched that whole plan. She waited for Anil to come back. But, he didn’t reach home until 9 O’ clock as he had been busy doing last-minute checks on the next day’s presentation. That night, as usual, Anil got plenty of sleep while Tamanna had to stuff a pillow into her mouth to suppress her cries.

However, the next morning, she knew she had no other option , but, to make Anil take her to the hospital as she had started bleeding. Anil when he saw his wife’s condition was devastated. He didn’t bother brushing his teeth or changing his pajamas before rushing his wife to the hospital. He immediately took his wife to the Casualty Care of the nearest hospital. The doctors, when they saw that she was pregnant took her to the labour room and the gynecologist in charge rushed to her aid. Anil could not think of anything else to do but just pace round. Even after another hour without any news of his wife’s condition made him call his boss and deliver the tragic news. But, when he was expecting tirades of uncontrollable shouts from his boss, Mr. Deshpande was quite understanding and just gave a curt reply.

‘It’s O.K. Why don’t you just concentrate on your wife for now? We’ll manage the presentation, eventhough it would have been better with your presence. Anyway, I hope your wife gets better.’

Anil felt like pulling out his hair in frustration, ‘We’ll manage the presentation.’ , the words kept ringing in his head. If he had known that it would be this easy to get away without finishing his work, he could have taken his wife to the hospital two days back. Right then, Mr. Deshpande’s earlier words came to his mind, *‘Family should always come first.’*

After a few more hours in the labour room, Tamanna was shifted to a room. And, the gynecologist delivered the bad news to Anil, ‘Well, sir. We are extremely sorry to tell you that we could not save your child’s life as it was that even the mother had lost a lot of blood and the baby had got detached from the placenta. But, it would have been a different case if we could have gotten a look at the mother a few days earlier.’

Needless, to say Anil was disappointed in himself. He wanted to make it up to his wife but he knew that it was too late. Anyway, he took three months leave from the company and helped Tamanna get back to normal. After spending a lot of time with each other, when they got back to their jobs, they were able to compete in their respective fields with a new vigor and passion. Ultimately, after a few years, Tamanna was able to give birth to a beautiful baby boy, mainly because Anil learnt from his mistakes in the past.

JJ

to

Katrina

Srini's mind was pondering over something and he did not know what it was. But it was for sure that there was some action required from him. He

knew that the action required would be physically visible to him in the coming week. As that is the feeling he had developed with his mind or brain since his childhood days. This concept had helped him solve many of his official, personal, family, societal problems with great fanfare. Many hand wondered how Srini at this age is able to manage these problems single handedly and with ease.

Srini was now thirty five and lekshmi thirty, with two kids Gopi and Krishna at ages five and two respectively. A peaceful Joyful family life

of the four, with the house scintillating with the joyful playful moods and expression of their kids. The fight of the kids with Lekshmi and how she is not able to manage the situations and calling for help. It was nothing to be concerned of and then why was he thinking that there's an action week for him next week. He tried to expel out from his brain but that brought him a bit of headache and hence did not care to find what his action to be was.

Three day passed and due to some tight official commitments Srini was able

to be back home only at 9 pm. Lekshmi was tired with the kids management all alone in the evening and she expressed her displeasure. But Srini was not the kind of Indian who would spend long hours at his office, his management was completely different and even it was curious for him to understand how he had developed that attitude. His style of functioning stuck to the office hours and nothing more and nothing less. And the activities carried out were in the time frame and with meticulous planning. The bosses of different departments of his organization were also of the thought that how Srini was able to manage time perfectly at this young age.

Srini just did not know how to manage Lekshmi and a comment came from him which was to upset her for sure.

You are gonna be Jayalatilha ? What ? Jayalalitha has been dead for some years now and what about her now!

Srini understood that the situation is trying to go out of control and hence he said You are developing real commanding attitude like the late

Jayalalitha who was the chief minister of Tamil Nadu for years. Lekshmi was happy about the praise as Jayalalitha was her idol during her college days.

It was going to be that evening where Srini was to come out with pendling action thing in his mind. But did not as he was tired for the day , children were asleep and after some chat With Lekshmi for some ten minutes they were off to bed.

The next two days went by peacefully and Srini met her college mate Manju at his office quite accidentally .It was a surprise for Manju as Srini in College was a student of the fatty, chubby , overweight type. How could he transform to this perfect lean health shape. She wanted to ask but refrained ,worried about the possible unpleasant situation. Meanwhile, thoughts were bombarding Srini about Manju on Manju being the beauty queen in their college. But now she has added on weight and has lost her charm completely.Srini who was. frightened to propose to her due to his overweight figure and was now so happy for his sister Lekha who had made this transformation in his life. Manju’s discussion was detailed about her new office near Srini’s office. Manju's husband Balaji was in Qatar. Balaji is on one year deputation as a Project Manager for a Petrochemical Complex in Doha. Since his schedule is tight for the year they had decided against going with the family. And then Manju with her two children and the in laws had shifted to Chennai.

The next Surprise was that Manju had started living in the same flat of Srini but on the 9th floor near Radhakrishna Salai. Life is full of surprises and Srini could not understand why he met her now, the proximity of the homes ,and her husband not in town. The day ended as Manju had

to be back in her office and so she just went back to her office downstairs after

some marketing of her products in Srini’s office. Srini did not see her in the evenIng. Thought how it would be to take Manju home as it is the same evening route.

It was a day where Srini had to do a lot of talk about Manju to his wife Lekshmi. Manju was also surprised at the turn of events as she had met Manju’s in-laws and had become closer with them as they were the only brahmin family in the flat.

Since Lekshmi was away from her parents she thought it good to be in company with the elder couple. Lekshmi was introduced to Manju only the next day and for now Srini understood what his pending actions were. As both Lekshmi and Manju were overweight due to their deliveries and the fat was causing discomfort in their excited introductory meeting. But Srini Could not open up as it would be harming his family relation and also the new surprise of Manju.

Dramatic ,miraculous, changes were to happen to Srini, Lekshmi and Manju. The outing of the family increased on a daily basis with mostly evenings to the Marina Beach and Park. The children enjoyed a lot with the new development and Lekshmi's son's improvement in communication as well after this relationship with Manju.

Meanwhile Lekshmi was taking some morning

Yoga lessons from Subramaniyan, Father in law of Manju. Yes she thought these changes happen in life for good Srini’s action thoughts were to be found in the week with the surprise question from Manju.

I want to ask you something I Can I ask..

Srini was a bit troubled now.Did Manju understand that Srini wanted to Propose to her in College. Did she meet Hari Srini's College friend who only knew about this all through his life. Srini was getting uncomfortable and suddenly Manju asked.

How did you bring down your weight!

Srini was relieved, happy and enthusiastic again. Life is like that you expect something hard and you get the exact opposite .Srini could not hide his smile

Why are you smiling. I am serious.I have to reduce mine as well. o k, I will help you, but you got to help me in this. It was now time for Manju to be uncomfortable. Manju wan worried about the possible help Srini was to ask.

You got to reduce Lekshmi as well. Manju a bit relieved and asked what? How can I reduce your wife's body weight. Listen I will tell you. Lekshmi is a very sensitive

person.I cannot ask her to reduce weight directly, then that would be the end of our family side. So I need you to develop a participative approach to help Lekshmi and some others in our flat.

. Why bringing in all here its only about my health, Manju quipped. It was time for Srini to explain the whole life exposure of his matured nature to her.

We have got time. We can do it. Don't worry, but you gotta Promise that the tough path ahead will be sailed smoothly by you. Yes for sure. Manju was unhappy that she did not get any tip for the day, but understood that Srini was having some huge plans. Manju talked to her husband Hari about this over phone and he was also happy about Manju’s initiative to be healthy

Manju asked the same question to Srini again and again .How did you lose weight ? Srini's smile was difficult for Manju to handle and hence she tried to throw her pen at him .

Wait it 's just a sentence

..

What a sentence, can bring down your weight.Manju did not understand. Yes it can, believe me and it is from your close one. Manju did not still understand what that was and the sentence as well.

Srini did not open up the magical Sentence of weight reduction with Manju for the next three months, but they had started the journey of weight management and Manju was following it very religiously,.Manju had taken consideration of Lekshmi in more ways than Srini had expected and the changes in the three month were really good for many in their apartment to observe. Srini changed the family meeting to be lively, energetic and with a fun filled activities .Both houses are filled with yoga classes, healthy eating and healthy lifestyle. Manju and Lekshmi were so happy that their weights were getting reduced .Lekshmi was of the view that its sheer magic that her weight is setting reduced unaware of the efforts of Srini and Manju.

But now Srsni observed slight hesitation on the part of Manju and it was time for Srini to go into the second

stage of his approach of health management.

The coming days discussion of Srini with Manju was that of his childhood life, college days, his family of

parents and a sister.Manju liked the changes and tried to accommodate all the inputs Srini was giving in both family’s lifestyle. Do not know how Srini’s approach of discussion about his childhood was to ignite the second spark of weight reduction in Manju and Lekshmi. Its six months now and the changes had been noticed by the

neighbours and Manju had to help them as well.Manju liked Srini's approach now with simple words how he is converting individuals to a healthy community. She remembered about the sentence which brought the drive in Srini's health journey. And understood that it was high time that she asked it again. But still she could receive only the charismatic smile of Srini.

Srini's father was lean and healthy while his mother was fat and overweight. Srini's sister Hema was like her

father in body stature and Srini like his mother. There was no approach of health management from his parents as he is doing now. But it was their body nature as well and all four used to take normal food and lead a normal life. But only Srini and his mother were fat and Hema and father were slim. During his college days this had become more evident and during his final year of College days he thought about his weight and trials to reduce it. But his efforts were going in vain as nothing was yielding him result. It was time now for Srini to come out with the sentence that transformed his healthy life. In the health Journey of nine months Srini understood now that both Manju and Lekshmi had changed their body shape completely from the voluminous type to the skinny faction model type .Lekshmi could not hold her surprise of how beautiful she had become .She also informed Srini how Manju was changing her health life for better. Srini could not hold his smile and understood how innocent his wife was not able to understand his health management plans

Balaji had come for a three day visit and was surprised by the changes in Hema and he thanked Srini for that. Although Lekshmi not understanding why Balanji was thanking Srini. One day was to be a family outing for both the families and they were off to Yercaud. It was a complete day of enjoyment for both the family including the elders in the cooler climate of Yercaud. It wan dinner and as everyone were having dinner silently Manju

broke the silence by asking Srini what was the one sentence which made the health transformation in him, Lekshmi was surprised to see Manju arsing this question to Srini as she had always been thinking that it was Manju who was doing her transformation. It took some special Skills of Srini to take the moments of Lekshmi to a lighter zone and he did that emphatically. Lekshmi now knew how intelligent and systematic her husband is in making changes in one’s life. She remembered how he had changed her reactive behaviour to a Proactive behavior by a similar kind of approach some five years back. Now since everything changed to jovial style Manju again came up with the question of what is the one sentence which had magle changes in him. Srini’s plan had worked and well and the results were open in public and there was no point in holding that. And he also understood that revelation now would help the health teams to maintain the health benefit which they have attained

Srini began to talk about his sister, how he enjoyed her childhood Company and how she tried to inculcate the management aspects he is making use of now. Then Srini shared that One sentence by his sister which forced him, made him to change completing and that

was.

Jayalalitha Cannot become katrina kaif.

Lekha was informing Srini about his body shape of Jayalalitha and it is not possible for him to come to the shape of Katrina kaif. Srini informed how that sentence had challenged him and how he started his Journey. Manju was surprised by the fact that a sentence about one who is nomore had been motivating him to be into a healthy life. Manju was thinking of the three different stages of approach brought about by Srini. While all these were happening Lekshmi was thinking about Srini’s comparison of her with Jayalalitha's approach some nine months ago and how she felt proud about her husband.

A sentence Can melt fat

The Metro Edappally.

Kozy Thar , when he took a new villa in the Edappally Suburbs, did not think that his name changing would be an embarrassment to him. When the words started ringing from multiple quarters of the native Edappally he thought of changing it back to Koshy Tharakan but Leena Kozy and the small boy Kozy and the girl Kozy was not willing to go for a complete name change of the family and hence it did not move ahead. But something else was to change in the family , certainly not the names.

Kozy who had completed his Instrumentation engineering was immediately airlifted to kuwait by his future father in law. The change was indigestible as many of his friends were looking for jobs, passing of the degree and making the exams , he was getting a figure which he could never imagine that he would be earning in the next ten years.The job safety,satisfaction aspects are completely in the Kozy family of four as the 20 years in kuwait had given him 110 plus kg assets which he wanted to donate.

Junior son kozy had completed his tenth exams and junior daughter Kozy ninth.. It was the thought of his professional achievement that made the senior Kozy to think.The professional degrees which he had completed had helped him to achieve greater heights in his career. This he wanted to be in his children as well and wanted to send them abroad for higher studies.But Mrs Kozy wanted their children do be with them till they finish their school education. Ok decisions made in an hour all going back to their home State Kerala , and preferably Kochi the industrial Capital .Mrs Kozy asked him about his future plans,Kozy said I do not have any future plans. My future plan is my kids' education, so just forget and move on. Mrs Kozy was not comfortable at that decision. But the kids were happy with their fathers decision. Kozy decided against going for a job at the ripe age of fifty.

Kuwait City to Edappally villa , the shift was great. when your pocket is full the things are just like the press of a button. How simple and easy it is,a new home, new car, new amenities, new neighbourhood,and all completed , in a week.. Kozy's understood the value of their products and also they were happy that there were many beneficiaries in the purchase dealing of all the assets at Edappally. They had thought this to be like a charity provision to the people who they had never met but expected some future benefits from some God.

The first six months of their stay in Edappally was easy, loving, caring and enjoying. The Edappally fly over work and the Metro work had started by this time and this had started some kind of restlessness in the family. What! A flyover/metro construction is causing itching in You. Kozy just began to think of the uneasiness in him. Just to find out the real root cause.

Junior Kozys studying in Al Ameen Public School were Picked and dropped by Kozy in their new automatic vehicle - Kozy understood that the truth was that his spending on the pick and drop is increasing.He was good at the beginning but the traffic began to give him some restlessness. Till this time his monthly Petrol bill was only Rs 1000. This month it was Rs 3000. So yes the problem of the kozys were the metro and flyover.. The construction had caused the car to be in the trattlie for more than half hour for the two kilometer trip from their villa to the school. The construction had caused them to get up early and do their homework in the Car.Kozys investment of 90 % of his Kuwait income in native lands for some future benefits made him understand the pain in the increase of Rs 2000 in the monthly petrol bill.Three years passed by, Metro and Edappally flyover was completed their 11th and 12th from Al Ameen School and had gone to choose medical profession as their career.'Children were gone and the old ones at home were having difficulties setting their mind to the right path. Kozy had been thinking of donating at least 30 kg of his asset of no 110 kg but was not knowing how to achieve that.Mrs Kozy said do not worry about your weight. You are healthy and that's what everyone wants to be. But Kozy could not forget his son's new friend at the medical College murmuring to his son’s ears about a fatty father.That was the time Kozy had decided to shed 30. The great 30 plan began with some new studies, vidios, mentors and what not. Mrs Kozy had to make some additional recipes which were considered as fat burners.She did this to satisfy her husband knowing that it was not going to benefit him as his fat and muscles are made of Arab chicken.

children had come home and they were on their first metro ride and that one was an unusual trip, although they had travelled in different countries' metros. But from the metro what caught Kozy's attention was the neat fool path along the national highway and felt pride in his country

developing to a new level of development. Children had gone back for their studies, Kozy called his wife to buy him a new pair of sports shoes. The next morning at 6:00 am Kozy was off his bed and went for a walk along the metro footpath. Mrs Kozy was surprised but she was happy that her husband woke up early..

The walk along the footpath was a new feeling to him. He did only a total of 15 minutes of the walk on the first day. But it was not to be like that day by day.He was getting up at 4:00 am and having a 2 hour walk daily. The next 30 days saw the variations, changes in the pace, the style of the walk and also the alternate changes in approach like listening to music while walking etc

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Sometimes in the evening kozy calculated the additional petrol expenses he had incurred during the past three years.It was Rs 4000 per month Rs 48,000 per Year and Rs 1,44,000 in three years. What Rs 1, 44,000 from him for the metro.Forfor just 1 lakhs of edappally car holders it was going to be Rs 1, 44,000,000,00 to the metro paid by the people. He couldn't connect with the number of zeros.Did not worry about the figure but the figure was to make him understand the unpleasant approach of development and its benefits to many. Forget it , Yes Forget it ,and he did.

But the variations in the walking, intermittent jogging had started giving him confidence as the metrowalk had helped him donate 5 kg in the first month. The next months were equally good as some of the neighbors also joined him in the walking. He was energetic to know that he was the initiator for that. The worry of Rs 1,44,000 from his pocket for the metro had gone from his mind but however as a professional his mind wandered to find a solution for million dollar expenses for the development of the country. These million dollar expenses were not at all good to India and minimizing this would help India in a great way. But doing something and advising something or suggesting something is different. He was into the doer category.He wanted to do and show. He concentrated on his health, weight,the metro foot walk and the feel it's giving him.

Three months had passed, Kozy had reduced 15 kg by this time, had to change the size of the track suit, He could not believe that this was possible. 15 kg reduction in three months, no diet, no intensity exercises, but just by walking

By this time he had walked almost about 900 km in total and that was something which could not believe it.Even in his dreams it wouldn't have been a reality. How could he . He did not know how he was able to do it.

But the changes were evident. He was receiving energy from somewhere . His drive to be active increased. A man who would not lift himself up to get a pen nearby is seen all active with he being not positioning himself for a long time at stretch. Leena Kozy was so happy for her husband.She was wondering how walking could change men.How walking could bring back her old energetic man in her husband. Now it was her turn to be joining him. But Kozy was a bit apprehensive. Because he knew that she would not be able to continuously walk for about a km , but he agreed and made changes in his route , timing and methods to accommodate her at least one time in a day..

The combined walk although started with so many doubts in both of their minds ist was changing as time moved on. The combined walk produced communication, clarity ,ideas , smile and happiness. When you buy health you get all this free?asked Leena.

Yes that's what happens. Children's phone calls were ones of the daily routine of their family times.Children were surprised to see the energy, drive and the positive changes in their parents. They could not believe the changes in their mom who at normal instances would pick up just the one negative of all the 100 positives available. And they conveyed it to their parents. Kozy and Leena began to feel that they were in their thirties rather than in their fifties.

Months passed .Kozy had lost another 15 kg in the next three months and had walked about 1800 km in total. He just paused to think ,Was it heavenly possible from him. He Wan healthy, happily, active committed , smiling

energetic and joyful.

Kozy could not believe that the financial expenses he incurred

due to the traffic issues of the metro flyover could bring him some good. Could a negative give you a positive. Yes and it was given to him and he accepted that gladly.

By this time Edappally was feeling lighter by 1000s of kilograms, as many had joined Kozy family routine and were enjoying the benefit of walking. Thinking of all the developments just murmured in his sleep.

Simply walk to Lose

About the author