

The Monk who didn't have to sell his Lamborghini

SANDEEP V. DANDEKAR



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Stories Matter

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Foreword



It is often said that the most profound truths and guidance come not from celebrities but from the quiet wisdom of those who choose to share their thoughts freely and authentically. Sandeep Dandekar's journey as a writer exemplifies this sentiment. For over two decades, he has been crafting his thoughts into words—sometimes in the form of poems, sometimes as songs, and often as contemplative paragraphs. These “scribbles,” as he humbly calls them, were initially scattered across social media, unbound by any particular theme or form. Yet, in their simplicity and honesty, they resonated with countless readers.

The turning point in this journey began when strangers—people Sandeep had never met—began reaching out, sharing how his writings had touched their lives. Some found daily inspiration in his words, starting, or ending their day by reading his posts. Others found solace and strength, crediting his writing with helping them navigate life's darkest hours. From a teenager overcoming debilitating arthritis to individuals battling despair, Sandeep's words became a beacon of hope and resilience.

Amid this outpouring of gratitude and encouragement, Sandeep named his collection of writings “Sandipani,” a name that beautifully encapsulates his essence as both a seeker and a guide. Though he initially hesitated to take his work beyond the digital realm, the insistence and heartfelt testimonials from his readers eventually convinced him that these writings were meant to serve a greater purpose. As Sandeep puts it, perhaps this is God's way of guiding him to do his part for the world around him.

In “The Monk Who Didn’t Have to Sell His Lamborghini”, Sandeep takes his reflections a step further, exploring the delicate balance between professional ambition, material pursuits, and spirituality. In a world where success is often measured by material acquisitions or societal status, this book invites readers to question, reflect, and ultimately redefine what fulfillment truly means. It is not about renouncing ambition or possessions, but about embracing a mindset where success and spirituality coexist harmoniously—where one can drive their “Lamborghini” without losing sight of deeper purpose.

As you turn these pages, you will find pieces of Sandeep’s heart, woven into reflections that are as relatable as they are profound. Whether you are seeking inspiration, solace, or simply a moment of quiet introspection, “The Monk Who Didn’t Have to Sell His Lamborghini” promises to leave an indelible mark on your soul.

With Admiration,

Sharad Sanghi

(A highly renowned extraordinary business leader)

Author's words to express the Concept of the book, the thought, and the purpose behind the book :

"The Monk Who Didn't Have to Sell His Lamborghini" delves into the harmonious integration of material success and spiritual fulfillment, challenging the notion that one must forsake worldly achievements to attain inner peace. Through a blend of personal narratives, philosophical insights, and practical guidance, the book illustrates how individuals can align their professional ambitions and material pursuits with their spiritual values, leading to a balanced and enriched life. By embracing both aspects, readers are encouraged to pursue their passions and goals without compromising their inner well-being, ultimately discovering that true contentment arises from the synergy of external accomplishments and internal harmony.

"From Tears to Triumph: Forging Resilience and Rising Beyond Mediocrity"

The emotional journey,

The incredible transformation,

and

the essence of extraordinary growth

just through a series of powerful stories!

Bringing to you the stories through which

The Mystic Mountain Monk created a

Total Transformation of

A Stressed common man into

A Wise Man with Extraordinary Clarity, Strength, and Peace.

In the heart of a bustling city, a middle-aged man found himself ensnared in the paradox of modern success. His life was a tapestry woven with threads of professional achievements and personal accolades, yet interlaced with strands of unrelenting stress, elusive triumphs, and the deep scars left by fractured relationships. The weight of unmet expectations and the sting of betrayal had cast a shadow over his once vibrant spirit, leaving him yearning for solace and clarity.

Whispers of a reclusive monk residing in the mist-clad mountains reached him—a sage who had renounced worldly interactions to commune with the universe and the divine. This monk practiced 'Maun,' a profound vow of silence, immersing himself in the depths of inner truth for extended periods. Drawn by an inexplicable pull, the man embarked on a pilgrimage to seek the monk's wisdom, hoping to unravel the knots of his troubled soul.

The journey led him through ancient forests, where the air was thick with the scent of pine and the songs of unseen birds. As he ascended, the cacophony of urban life faded, replaced by the serene whispers of nature. Upon reaching the secluded hermitage, perched precariously on a cliff's edge, he was greeted by the sight of the monk, seated in tranquil meditation, his presence exuding an aura of timeless wisdom.

Without opening his eyes, the monk spoke, his voice a gentle murmur that seemed to harmonize with the rustling leaves. "I have been awaiting your arrival. Your journey was foreseen, and your questions, burdens, and silent cries are known to me."

The man, taken aback by the monk's prescience, listened intently as the sage continued, "I shall share with you a series of stories—each

a mirror reflecting the facets of your soul. You must listen with more than your ears; let the tales seep into your being, live through their characters, and allow their essence to permeate your consciousness. Speak not until the final story concludes, for only then will you be ready to voice the questions that remain, if any persist."

The monk's eyes opened, revealing depths that seemed to hold the universe itself. "At dawn, as the first light kisses the peaks, we shall begin. Prepare yourself, not by emptying your mind, but by opening your heart to the transformative power of the narratives you are about to embrace."

As the man settled into the stillness of the mountain sanctuary, a profound sense of anticipation mingled with the crisp night air. The stars above shimmered with an ethereal glow, as if the cosmos itself were poised to unveil its secrets. In the silence, he felt the first stirrings of a metamorphosis, the beginning of a journey not just to the monk, but into the deepest recesses of his own soul.

The following morning, as the sun's rays painted the sky with hues of gold and rose, the man and the monk sat facing the horizon. The monk began to weave his tales—each story a delicate thread, intricately embroidered into the fabric of the man's consciousness. With every narrative, the man felt layers of pain and confusion dissolve, replaced by clarity and an awakening sense of inner peace.

Days flowed like mountain streams, each bringing new stories and deeper understanding. The man's heart resonated with the timeless wisdom imparted by the monk, and he found himself traversing the landscapes of his own soul, guided by the luminous light of newfound awareness.

When the final story was told, a profound silence enveloped them—a silence not of absence, but of fulfillment. The man realized that the questions he had carried with him had transformed, their edges softened by the insights he had gained. He bowed deeply to the monk, gratitude, and reverence shining in his eyes.

The monk, returning the bow with a serene smile, spoke softly, "Your journey does not end here. Carry these stories within you, let them guide your steps, and remember—the path to inner peace lies not in the renunciation of the world, but in the harmonious integration of the external and the internal, the material and the spiritual."

With a heart renewed and spirit awakened, the man descended the mountain, the monk's words echoing in his soul like a sacred mantra. He returned to his life, not to escape it, but to embrace it fully, armed with the wisdom of the mountains and the silent teachings of the sage who dwelled among them.

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The Monk's Awakening



In the serene foothills of the Himalayas, where the majestic peaks kissed the sky and the sound of Ganga's gentle flow echoed through the valleys, Rajan sat in silence. His journey had been long, arduous, and transformative. He was barefoot, the simplicity of his life reflecting the purity of his soul.

Years ago, Rajan had been a man of ambition—an entrepreneur at the height of success, owning everything the world deemed valuable: luxury cars, a sprawling mansion, and a life filled with the applause of society. His Lamborghini was his pride, a symbol of his victory over life's struggles. Yet, amidst all the wealth, a deep hollowness lingered within him. The more he gained, the more he realized that something essential was missing.

One night, under the dim lights of his penthouse, Rajan's heart cracked open. He could not remember the last time he had felt truly alive, truly connected to his purpose. Success had become a prison, a constant demand to achieve more without ever knowing what he was truly chasing. In that moment of clarity, he made the most radical decision of his life—to walk away from everything. He would no longer be a prisoner to his possessions. He would search for the truth that had eluded him for so long.

Barefoot, he left the life he knew behind. The road was long, and the journey was lonely at times, but each step carried him closer to the wisdom he sought. He visited ashrams, met countless sages, and sat in the quiet of temples where the noise of the world couldn't

reach. Yet, it wasn't until he reached the serene ashram of Swami Vikram, a former successful lawyer turned monk, that the real transformation began.

Swami Vikram had seen the emptiness that wealth could not fill. He had once sat at the top of the social ladder, but his soul had yearned for more. Now, his wisdom was a beacon to those who sought peace, and he saw the same restlessness in Rajan that he had once experienced.

“Rajan,” Swami Vikram said one evening, his eyes calm but penetrating, “life’s truth isn’t found in the labels we wear or the things we possess. Right and wrong, success and failure—they are fleeting, defined by the mind’s perception. What truly matters is understanding that the path to freedom is not about what you give up or what you attain. It’s about realizing that all you need is already within you.”

Rajan listened, and in that moment, a profound shift occurred within him. He realized that for all his wealth, and his accomplishments, he had been seeking validation from the world outside. But the answers, the peace, the purpose he longed for—were inside him all along.

He sat in meditation beneath the same banyan tree every day, letting go of the need for possessions, recognition, or power. With each breath, he shed the layers of identity he had so carefully built. His life had become a journey not to acquire, but to relinquish—the ego, the desires, the need for control.

One evening, after years of seeking, Rajan finally understood. He smiled, for he knew now that true fulfillment wasn't about acquiring more—it was about understanding the impermanence of everything, including right and wrong. The real peace came in accepting life as it was, without judgment.

Rajan's story became one of the most inspiring in the ashram. People came from far and wide, drawn to the quiet strength and wisdom in his eyes. He never spoke of his past life, but when asked, he would say simply, "I didn't need to sell my Lamborghini to become free. I just needed to stop chasing the world and start listening to my heart."

And so, Rajan walked the rest of his journey, not as a man burdened by the weight of his past, but as a free spirit, living with the understanding that the truth of life isn't defined by what we own, but by who we choose to become.

It was a long journey up to here, too deeply understand that indeed there can never be an absolute definition of right and wrong- Am so glad this journey' was barefooted and so minimalistic, that I never owned, so nor had to sell my Lamborghini to become a Monk!



The Tale of Arjun and the Banyan Tree



In the quaint village of Madhavpur, nestled along the banks of the serene Godavari River, lived a man named Arjun. Known for his sharp business acumen, Arjun was the wealthiest man in the village. His sprawling bungalow and lush mango orchards were the envy of all. Yet, despite his riches, Arjun was a man burdened by loneliness.

One summer evening, as the sun cast its golden glow over the fields, Arjun strolled to the ancient banyan tree at the village square. It was said that this tree had witnessed generations of villagers weaving their lives together. Children played under its shade, lovers exchanged vows, and elders shared tales of wisdom.

Under the tree sat Amma Shanta, an elderly woman with kind eyes and a serene demeanor. She was revered for her wisdom and her knack for unraveling life's mysteries with simple words.

Arjun, carrying the weight of his solitude, approached her and said, "Amma, I have everything—money, land, and power. But why does my heart feel so empty?"

Amma Shanta smiled gently and replied, "Tell me, Arjun, what do you do with your wealth?"

"I save it, invest it, and plan to pass it on to my heirs," Arjun said, pride evident in his voice.

"And how do you live your days?" she asked.

“I work hard from dawn to dusk, ensuring my fortune grows. There’s little time for leisure or relationships,” Arjun admitted.

Amma Shanta gestured toward a group of children playing nearby. “Look at them. They have nothing but the clothes on their backs and the love of this community. Yet, their laughter fills the air. Do you think they care about tomorrow's wealth?”

Arjun shook his head, intrigued by her point.

“Life is like the river,” she continued. “It flows continuously, nourishing everything in its path. It does not hoard its waters. To live well is to flow with love, laughter, and purpose, not to dam yourself with riches.”

Her words lingered in Arjun’s mind. That night, he couldn’t sleep. The next morning, he made a decision.

Arjun began sharing his wealth with the villagers, funding schools, repairing homes, and hosting community feasts. He spent his evenings at the banyan tree, playing with children, sharing stories, and learning from Amma Shanta. Slowly, he began to find a sense of fulfillment that no amount of gold could bring.

Years later, when Arjun passed away, the entire village gathered under the banyan tree to bid him farewell. They didn’t remember him for his wealth but for his kindness, his laughter, and the love he had shared.

The banyan tree stood tall, its roots deeper than ever, as a silent witness to a man who had learned that it’s not how rich you die, but how well you live, that truly matters.

Important is to live well.

Not die rich!



The Journey of Meera: A Tale of Perseverance



In the vibrant town of Udaipur, Rajasthan, lived Meera, a young woman with a passion for traditional Rajasthani dance. From a tender age, she was captivated by the graceful movements and expressive storytelling of the dance form. Her dream was to perform at the grand Udaipur Dance Festival, a prestigious event that showcased the finest talents.

Meera's family, though supportive, faced financial constraints. Her father, a skilled potter, and her mother, a weaver, worked tirelessly to make ends meet. Despite their hardships, they encouraged Meera to pursue her passion.

Determined to achieve her dream, Meera sought guidance from Guru Raghav, a renowned dance master in the town. Under his tutelage, she honed her skills, learning intricate footwork, expressive gestures, and the rich history behind each dance form.

As the festival approached, Meera faced numerous challenges. Her family struggled to afford the costumes and props required for her performance. Additionally, the scorching summer heat made daily practice sessions exhausting. There were moments when Meera felt disheartened, questioning her ability to succeed.

One evening, as Meera sat by the serene Lake Pichola, reflecting on her journey, she recalled the words of her late grandmother: "Don't stop until you are proud." These words resonated deeply within her, reigniting her determination.

With renewed vigor, Meera approached the local artisans, seeking their help in creating her costumes. The community, recognizing her dedication, rallied together, contributing materials and expertise. Her parents, despite their fatigue, supported her by managing household chores, allowing her more time to practice.

On the day of the Udaipur Dance Festival, Meera took the stage, her heart pounding with anticipation. As the music began, she danced with all her might, her movements a harmonious blend of grace and strength. The audience was spellbound, witnessing a performance that was both technically flawless and emotionally stirring.

When the final note played, Meera stood still, her chest heaving, a smile of contentment on her face. She had poured her soul into her performance, and in that moment, she felt a profound sense of pride.

The applause that followed was deafening, but Meera's greatest reward was the satisfaction of knowing she had given her best. She had not stopped until she was proud.

Don't stop until you're proud



The Tale of Priya and the Lotus Pond



In the bustling city of Pune, Maharashtra, lived Priya, a young woman known for her radiant smile and cheerful demeanor. To the outside world, she appeared to have it all—a successful career, a loving family, and a wide circle of friends. Yet, beneath her bright exterior, Priya often felt a sense of emptiness and dissatisfaction.

One evening, after a particularly challenging day at work, Priya decided to visit the serene Saras Baug, a historic garden in the heart of Pune. As she sat by the lotus pond, watching the delicate flowers bloom under the moonlight, she met an elderly woman named Aai Kamala, who was tending to the plants.

Aai Kamala noticed the sadness in Priya's eyes and invited her to join in planting a new lotus sapling. As they worked together, Aai Kamala shared stories of her life, filled with both joys and hardships. She spoke of the importance of nurturing one's inner happiness, rather than merely displaying a facade of joy.

Priya listened intently, realizing that she had been so focused on meeting external expectations that she had neglected her own well-being. Inspired by Aai Kamala's wisdom, Priya decided to embark on a journey of self-discovery and inner peace.

Over the next few months, Priya engaged in activities that brought her genuine happiness—painting, practicing yoga, and spending quality time with her family. She learned to set boundaries at work and prioritize her mental health.

As Priya embraced her true self, her inner happiness began to reflect in her interactions with others. Her smile became more authentic, and her relationships deepened. She understood that while looking happy is good, being happy is truly important.

Looking happy is good...

Being happy is important!



The Strength Within



In the quaint town of Udaipur, nestled between shimmering lakes and lush hills, lived Meera, a young woman known for her radiant smile and unyielding spirit. Yet, what few knew was that behind her bright eyes lay a story of immense struggle—a battle not with the world, but with her own mind.

Meera had once been a rising star in her corporate job, climbing the ranks at an impressive pace. But life had a way of testing her resilience. A series of setbacks—betrayal by a trusted friend, a failed project that wasn't her fault, and the sudden loss of her father—left her shattered. Her once-vibrant world now seemed like a dull, endless loop of pain.

Her mind became her greatest adversary. Negative thoughts consumed her, whispering doubts and fears every waking moment. “You’re not good enough,” it told her. “You’ll never succeed again.” Slowly, Meera began withdrawing from her friends, her work, and the dreams she had once nurtured.

One day, as she sat by the serene Lake Pichola, staring at the water’s calm surface, she noticed an elderly man meditating under a peepal tree. His peaceful aura caught her attention. Unable to resist, she approached him and asked, “How do you stay so calm and collected? Don’t you ever feel overwhelmed by life?”

The man opened his eyes and smiled. “My dear,” he said, “life has its storms, but it is the mind that decides whether we sink or sail.

The mind can be your greatest enemy or your most loyal friend—it all depends on how you train it.”

Intrigued, Meera sat with him and listened. The man, who introduced himself as Govind Baba, shared a simple yet profound truth.

“Imagine your mind as a fertile field,” he said. “Whatever seeds you plant—positive or negative—will grow. If you constantly nurture thoughts of despair, they will spread like weeds, choking your spirit. But if you plant seeds of hope, resilience, and positivity, you’ll cultivate a garden of inspiration that no storm can destroy.”

That evening, Meera returned home with a renewed determination. She decided to train her mind. Every morning, she wrote down three things she was grateful for. Whenever a negative thought crept in, she consciously replaced it with a positive one. She began meditating daily, focusing on her breath, and letting go of her worries. Slowly, her inner world began to shift.

Over time, Meera rediscovered her passion for painting—a hobby she had abandoned years ago. Her artwork became an expression of her newfound strength and positivity. People from across the town admired her paintings, which radiated hope and joy. One of her pieces, titled *The Rising Sun*, even won a national award.

Meera’s life transformed, but it wasn’t because her circumstances had changed—it was her mindset that had. She often shared her story with others, reminding them that the power to rise above life’s challenges lay within.

One evening, as she stood by Lake Pichola, watching the sunset paint the sky in hues of gold, she thought of Govind Baba’s words. Indeed, nothing had hurt her like her mind when she had allowed it to wander into darkness. But nothing had lifted her higher than her mind once she chose to train it in the light of positivity.

From that day onward, Meera's story became a beacon for those around her—a testament to the unyielding power of the human mind when nurtured with care and determination.

Nothing can uplift & raise you like your mind.



6

The Sculptor's Vision



In the ancient town of Mahabalipuram, where the salty breeze carried whispers of centuries-old tales and intricate stone carvings adorned temple walls, lived Arjun, a master sculptor. Renowned across the region, Arjun's work was said to breathe life into stone. Yet, his story was not one of fame alone—it was one of vision, patience, and faith.

Arjun had inherited his craft from his grandfather, a sculptor whose hands had shaped temple idols worshipped for generations. As a boy, Arjun had watched in awe as his grandfather's chisel moved with purpose, revealing deities from rough granite blocks. "How do you create something so divine from a mere stone, Thatha?" young Arjun had once asked.

His grandfather smiled, wiping his hands. "A sculpture is never created, my boy. It's already there, hidden within the stone. My job is only to see it and carefully remove what doesn't belong."

These words stayed with Arjun as he grew, shaping his understanding of the art. But his greatest challenge came years later when the village temple commissioned him to create a towering idol of Lord Shiva. It was to be the centerpiece of the grand Maha Shivaratri celebrations.

The stone block was massive, jagged, and imperfect. As villagers gathered to watch Arjun inspect it, doubts filled the air. "This stone is too flawed," one elder murmured. "It will never yield a masterpiece."

But Arjun's eyes sparkled with confidence. "The Lord is already in this stone," he replied. "I only need to find Him."

Over the following months, Arjun worked tirelessly. Each strike of his chisel echoed with purpose. The days were hot, the work demanding, but Arjun never wavered. With each chip of stone that fell, the form of Lord Shiva began to emerge. Villagers, who had once doubted him, now watched in awe as the divine figure slowly came to life.

One day, a young girl named Kavya, curious and full of questions, approached him. "Arjun Anna," she asked, "how do you know where to strike? Aren't you afraid you might make a mistake?"

Arjun paused, his chisel resting on the stone. "Kavya, mistakes happen when we focus on the stone's flaws. But I don't see flaws—I see what lies within. Each strike is guided not by fear, but by trust in the vision."

Kavya nodded; her eyes wide with wonder.

As the final days approached, a storm swept through the village, threatening to delay the unveiling of the idol. Arjun worked through the rain; his determination unwavering. When the skies finally cleared, the villagers gathered to witness the unveiling.

The moment was magical. As the cloth covering the idol fell away, gasps filled the air. Lord Shiva stood tall, powerful, and serene; every detail was exquisite. It was as if the deity had always been there, waiting to be revealed.

Tears welled in the eyes of the temple priest. "Arjun," he said, his voice trembling, "this is not just a sculpture—it is divinity itself. How did you create something so perfect?"

Arjun smiled humbly. "I didn't create Him. Lord Shiva was always here. I only removed what didn't belong."

The villagers bowed in reverence, not just to the idol but to the lesson it carried: greatness isn't born; it is revealed, patiently and skillfully, by those who dare to see beyond the surface.

Arjun's story became a source of inspiration for generations to come, a reminder that within every rough exterior lies hidden potential, waiting for the sculptor's eye and unwavering faith to bring it forth.

*A sculpture is never to be created, it has always been there!
Only the eye of the sculptor needs to see it and remove the excess
material very skillfully.
And it emerges!*



The Colors of Life



In the vibrant city of Jaipur, where the pink walls of palaces reflected the brilliance of the setting sun, there lived a young artist named Riya. She was known for her intricate paintings of Rajasthani culture, blending traditional designs with bursts of color. But behind her beautiful work was a life that, until recently, had been anything but colorful.

Riya had grown up in a conservative family where the only acceptable path was to pursue stability—either through marriage or a steady job. From an early age, she had been told that life’s meaning lay in duty and routine, not in following one’s passion. Yet, as she grew older, the artist within her longed for freedom, for the chance to express herself beyond the confines of tradition.

One evening, while sitting by the window of her modest home, Riya watched the sky transform into a beautiful spectrum of colors—pink, orange, violet, yellow, and blue—as the sun set behind the Aravalli hills. It reminded her of the Vibgyor—the seven colors of the rainbow. In that moment, she realized how confined her life had been, like a painting with only one color, missing the vast spectrum of possibilities that life had to offer.

She thought of her mother, who had always told her, “Life is simple, beta. Just stay on the right path.” And her father, who had said, “Focus on what’s practical, Riya. Don’t get lost in fantasies.” But Riya knew in her heart that life wasn’t meant to be monochromatic.

The very next day, she made a decision. She would no longer live colorless. She would embrace the vibrancy that life had to offer, no matter how unconventional it seemed.

At first, her family was confused. “What are you doing, Riya?” her mother asked. “You’ve always been a good girl. Why change now?”

Riya took a deep breath and smiled. “Because, Maa, life is a *Vibgyor*. I cannot live with only one shade. I need to paint my life with every color, to explore what’s beyond the horizon.”

With determination, Riya enrolled in an art exhibition that was to be held in the city center. It wasn’t easy. She faced doubts from her relatives, who questioned the practicality of her decision. “What will you gain from all this?” they asked. “How will this secure your future?”

But Riya didn’t answer them. Instead, she spent the next few weeks painting with a passion she had never known. Her art became an expression of her inner journey—each stroke, each color representing a part of herself she had yet to discover. The paintings spoke of freedom, of the joy of living fully, and of embracing every shade of life, from the darkest blues to the brightest yellows.

When the day of the exhibition arrived, Riya stood nervously in front of her canvases, unsure of how people would react. To her surprise, the crowd was captivated. Visitors admired her use of color and the emotion she had poured into each piece.

An art critic named Aarav, who had been observing the exhibit, walked up to her. “Your paintings are unlike anything I’ve seen before,” he said. “You’ve managed to capture not just the beauty of the colors, but the essence of life itself. It’s bold, it’s daring. And most importantly, it’s real.”

Riya's heart soared. At that moment, she realized that the true essence of life was in the willingness to explore, to embrace every experience, every emotion, and every color it had to offer. Her once colorless existence had bloomed into a vibrant tapestry of possibility.

Months later, Riya's art began to gain recognition, and she was invited to art shows across India. But the success didn't matter as much to her as the freedom she had found. She had learned that to live fully, she needed to embrace every part of herself and her journey, without fear of what others might think.

One evening, as Riya walked through the streets of Jaipur, watching the city bathed in hues of gold from the setting sun, she thought back to the moment when she had made her choice to live with all the colors of life. She smiled to herself, knowing that the rainbow of possibilities was far more beautiful than a single, colorless existence.

For life was never meant to be lived in just one shade. Life, like art, was meant to be vibrant, full of all the colors it could hold.

Life is vibgyor, why live colorless or with one shade.



The Kindness of Asha



In the bustling town of Kanchipuram, known for its vibrant silk sarees and ancient temples, lived Asha, a young woman with a heart full of compassion. She had always been taught by her mother to help others, to be kind, and to walk the path of righteousness. But as she grew older, she learned that life, especially among humans, wasn't as simple as she had imagined.

Asha ran a small shop selling handwoven scarves, and it was in the heart of the marketplace, where the winds of fortune often changed direction. The shop was modest, but Asha had always treated her customers with the utmost care, offering them warmth with every interaction. Yet, not all the people who entered her shop were kind or appreciative. Some haggled fiercely over prices, while others took advantage of her generosity. One day, an elderly man walked into her store, demanding a scarf at an unreasonably low price. "I can't afford much, child," he insisted, his voice gruff. "Give me a discount."

Asha smiled kindly, understanding the man's situation. She offered him a reasonable discount, knowing that he was a regular customer. But as he left the shop, he muttered something under his breath. "Young girls these days think they can get away with anything."

Asha's heart sank, but she refused to let it show. She continued her work, smiling at the next customer who walked in. Yet, in her heart, a storm began to brew. The harshness of the world around her sometimes felt unbearable. She had always believed in the goodness of people, in the idea that if she treated others well, they would return the favor. But life wasn't always so simple.

One evening, as she closed her shop, her younger brother, Ravi, came by. Ravi was a straightforward, practical man, and he noticed the weariness in Asha's eyes. "Didi, why do you always try so hard to be kind to everyone? People take advantage of you, and you let them," he said, his voice filled with concern.

Asha looked at him, her heart heavy. "Ravi, I know the world isn't perfect. People aren't always kind in return. But I cannot let that change who I am. I cannot allow their behavior to turn me into someone bitter. I want to be the kind of person who sees the good in others, even if they don't always see it in me."

Ravi shook his head, clearly worried for his sister. "But Asha, doesn't it hurt when people don't appreciate what you do for them?"

Asha's face softened as she spoke. "Yes, it does. But my kindness isn't about what I get in return. It's about who I choose to be, regardless of how others behave. I can't control how people treat me, but I can control how I treat them."

Her words stayed with Ravi, and for the first time, he truly understood his sister's unwavering belief in goodness. The next day, a woman from the village came to Asha's shop. She had heard about Asha's reputation for kindness and asked if she could buy a scarf for her daughter's wedding, but she couldn't afford it. Asha, without hesitation, offered her the scarf at no cost. The woman was taken aback, grateful beyond words.

Months passed, and Asha's reputation for kindness continued to grow. She never expected anything in return for her actions, but one day, the elderly man who had once been rude to her returned. This time, he entered her shop with a different look in his eyes. "I want to apologize," he said, his voice sincere. "I didn't realize how hard you work, and I should have been more respectful. I've brought you this," he said, handing her a beautifully woven scarf, a gift of gratitude.

Asha smiled, accepting the gift with grace. “Thank you,” she replied. “But remember, kindness is never about expecting something in return. It’s simply about being who you are, regardless of what the world gives back.”

As the years passed, Asha continued to live by her principles. Her shop became not just a place of business, but a symbol of her values. People came to her not only to buy scarves but to learn the art of living with kindness and grace.

And through it all, Asha remained unshaken. She understood that while the world could be harsh and unkind, it didn’t have to change her essence. “I do not want that fact to change my being always good to other humans,” she often told Ravi, who now, too, saw the wisdom in his sister’s unwavering commitment to goodness.

For Asha, kindness was not an expectation—it was a choice. And as long as she lived, she would always choose to be kind, no matter what.

I am not naive to think that, unlike animals, if I am good to human beings, they will also be same to me. And, I am also clear that I do not want that fact to change my being always good to other humans.



The Journey of Aarav



In the sleepy town of Rishikesh, nestled by the Ganges and surrounded by towering Himalayan peaks, lived Aarav. He was a man whose silver hair reflected the wisdom of his years, but his journey had not always been marked by peace and serenity.

As a child, Aarav had been the quiet one—an introvert who shied away from crowds, his heart constantly racing at the thought of speaking in front of others. The world around him seemed too loud, too fast, too much. He was afraid of rejection, afraid of being judged, and most of all, afraid of his own voice.

Aarav’s parents, who ran a small Ayurvedic clinic in the town, often tried to encourage him to be more outgoing. “Aarav, beta, you have so much potential. Don’t let fear hold you back,” his father would say gently. But Aarav’s fear was a silent force, one that wrapped around him like an invisible chain. It confined him and restricted him from truly engaging with life.

One day, when he was around fifteen, Aarav found himself standing at the edge of the river, staring at the waters that flowed so effortlessly toward the ocean. He had always admired the river’s confidence, its relentless forward movement. His grandmother, who lived nearby, saw him standing there and joined him.

“Do you see the river, Aarav?” she asked softly, her voice filled with the weight of years. “It never asks for permission. It doesn’t fear obstacles or storms. It simply flows, undeterred. You, too, have that power inside you.”

Those words stayed with him for years. But it wasn't until many years later when Aarav had grown into a young man, that he truly understood what his grandmother had meant.

Aarav moved to Delhi to pursue a career in engineering, far from the small town he had known. The city was bustling, filled with noise, ambition, and endless challenges. It was here, in the heart of the fast-paced metropolis, that Aarav faced the biggest turning point in his life.

At work, Aarav was asked to lead a team for an important project. The very idea of being in charge, of speaking to a room full of people, filled him with dread. He had always been comfortable in the background, hidden behind the scenes, but now, the spotlight was on him.

For days, Aarav wrestled with self-doubt. "I'm not good enough," he thought. "What if I fail? What if they laugh at me?" But remembering his grandmother's words, Aarav decided to face his fear head-on.

The night before the big presentation, Aarav sat alone in his room, taking deep breaths. He closed his eyes and imagined himself as the river—fluid, unstoppable, and fearless. He could feel the fear, but he no longer let it control him. He knew that in order to grow, he had to step into the unknown.

The next day, Aarav stood before his team, his heart still racing, but his mind clear. As he spoke, something shifted within him. The fear began to melt away, replaced by a calm confidence. The more he spoke, the more he realized that the challenge was not as big as he had imagined.

Years passed, and Aarav continued to push himself beyond his comfort zone. From leading projects at work to speaking at conferences, he expanded his horizons. With each challenge he faced, he grew—stronger, more confident, and more resilient. His transformation was nothing short of extraordinary.

One afternoon, many years later, Aarav sat by the Ganges once again, his silver hair catching the soft glow of the setting sun. He had come full circle—from the fearful, introverted child to the fearless, relaxed man who now faced life with a calm, invincible spirit.

Aarav smiled as he watched the river flow, its steady pace reminding him of his own journey. “The bigger the challenge, the bigger I expand myself,” he thought, his heart swelling with gratitude. He had learned that life’s greatest lessons were not in avoiding fear, but in embracing it—letting it fuel the growth of one’s spirit.

Aarav’s life was no longer defined by fear or doubt. It was defined by courage, resilience, and by the knowledge that within every challenge, there was an opportunity to expand.

And so, the man with the silver hair became a symbol of transformation—a reminder that no matter where you start, it is your willingness to face the unknown that shapes who you become.

Bigger that challenge, the bigger than it ! expand myself. Loved this journey from a fearful introvert child to a fearless relaxed invincible silver haired man.



The Strength of Aadhya



In the small, serene village of Suryanagar, nestled between the green fields of Uttar Pradesh, there lived a young woman named Aadhya. From the outside, Aadhya's life seemed like the epitome of peacefulness—she lived in a modest home surrounded by lush nature, had a loving family, and was admired by everyone for her calm and composed demeanor. Yet, deep within, Aadhya struggled with an internal battle that no one could see.

Growing up, Aadhya had always been a quiet, introspective child. Her father, a respected farmer, would often tell her, “Aadhya, you must always stand on your own feet. Dependence is like a shadow—it never lets you live freely.” But Aadhya, who was often lost in her own thoughts, found herself seeking approval and comfort from others. She relied on her friends, family, and mentors to make decisions, to validate her actions, and to ease her fears.

One day, tragedy struck. Aadhya's father, her greatest pillar of strength, passed away suddenly, leaving her alone to manage their farm and home. The village was kind, offering support, but Aadhya felt an overwhelming sense of helplessness. For the first time in her life, she had no one to turn to for answers. The weight of responsibility felt crushing.

Her mother, though deeply mourning her husband's loss, recognized the change in Aadhya. “Beta,” she said one evening, sitting beside her on the porch, “your father always believed in your strength. He knew that no matter what came your way, you would find your own path. It's time you believed that too.”

Aadhya looked at her mother, her heart torn. “But Maa, I don’t know how to do this alone. I have no experience. I don’t know if I’m strong enough.”

Her mother gently took her hand. “When your father started, he had no experience either. But he trusted himself, and so must you. Life doesn’t wait for anyone. It’s time to take ownership of your life, of what happens to you. When you start relying on yourself, you will never feel alone, because you will always have yourself to lean on.”

Those words echoed in Aadhya’s heart long after her mother had gone to sleep. That night, as she sat by the window, watching the moonlight dance on the fields, she realized something crucial—her entire life had been defined by the support of others. But now, the challenge was to stand firm, not because she had to, but because she was capable of it.

Over the following weeks, Aadhya made the difficult decision to take control of the farm. She woke up at the crack of dawn, learning the intricacies of managing the land and working tirelessly through the seasons. There were moments of doubt when the weight of responsibility seemed too heavy to bear. Yet, with each passing day, she grew stronger.

One day, a neighboring farmer, Gaurav, came by to check on her progress. He had seen the changes in Aadhya and was impressed. “Aadhya, I must say, I never thought you would take on so much. Your father would be proud.”

Aadhya smiled, a sense of calm settling within her. “Thank you, Gaurav. But I’m not doing this for my father. I’m doing it because I know that when I’m alone, I’m in the best company. I have everything I need within me.”

Gaurav looked at her with respect. “You’ve truly become the woman your father always knew you could be.”

Years passed, and Aadhya’s farm flourished under her steady guidance. She continued to work hard, but she no longer sought validation from others. With every challenge that came her way, she faced it head-on, confident in her ability to find a solution. She had learned the greatest lesson of all—that independence wasn’t just about surviving alone, it was about realizing that she was enough, with or without anyone else.

One evening, as she sat by the fields, watching the sunset with a sense of peace, Aadhya realized that her father’s words had come true. She had taken ownership of her life, and in doing so, she had discovered a strength that could never be taken away.

“I am never alone when I am there with me,” Aadhya thought, smiling softly to herself. “When I am alone, I am in the best, most dependable company.”

And in that moment, she knew that no matter where life took her, she would always have herself to rely on.

The Strength Within

In the quiet village of Bhanpur, nestled between lush fields and the serene banks of the Yamuna River, lived a young woman named Meera. She was known for her gentle nature and her willingness to help others. She had grown up in a close-knit family, surrounded by relatives and neighbors, always seeking validation from those around her. However, as the years passed, Meera began to feel a sense of emptiness, a longing for something deeper, something more than the fleeting support of others.

Meera’s father, Raghav, was a well-respected farmer in the village. He had taught her the value of hard work, but he had also been

protective, always stepping in when she faced challenges. Her mother, Suman, had often told her, “When you have the support of family, you are never truly alone.” This idea stuck with Meera, and she often found herself turning to others whenever she encountered difficulties. Yet, the more she relied on others, the more she felt the weight of dependence. Something inside her stirred, telling her that there had to be more to life than always seeking support from those around her.

One day, while visiting the village temple, Meera sat by the steps, watching the Ganga flow peacefully. It was there that she met an old sage, Sri Vishwanath, who had come to the temple to meditate. He noticed her sitting quietly and approached her, his eyes kind and knowing.

“Child, what brings you here?” he asked, his voice like a soft breeze.

Meera looked up at him, feeling a connection. “I’ve always been surrounded by people, Baba,” she said. “But I feel like something is missing. I rely on others for support, for advice, but in my heart, I feel lonely. I wonder if there’s more to life than just seeking help from others.”

The sage smiled gently, his eyes twinkling with understanding. “You seek to be strong, Meera. But strength does not lie in depending on others. True strength comes from within. When you learn to stand on your own, you will realize that you are never truly alone.”

Meera listened intently as the sage continued, “Take ownership of your life, child. Embrace independence. When you stop searching for validation from the outside, you will discover the greatest companionship within yourself.”

His words echoed in her heart as she made her way back to the village. That night, Meera lay awake, reflecting on the sage’s

teachings. She realized that she had always sought comfort in the presence of others, fearing loneliness. But what if the key to true peace was not in seeking constant support but in finding strength in her own company?

The next morning, Meera made a decision. She would no longer wait for others to solve her problems or offer her support. She would take ownership of her life and her choices.

For the next few weeks, Meera began to take small steps toward independence. She started managing her father's farm on her own, making decisions, and trusting her own instincts. She began to spend more time in solitude, reading, reflecting, and journaling. The more time she spent alone, the more she discovered about herself. She realized that when she was by herself, she wasn't lonely; she was in the best company—the company of her own thoughts, ideas, and dreams.

One day, as Meera stood alone by the river, she felt a sense of peace that she had never known before. She looked at the flowing water, feeling the strength of the current. "I am never alone when I am there with me," she whispered to herself, a smile playing on her lips. She felt a deep connection to her inner self, and for the first time, she understood what the sage had meant.

Over time, Meera's life transformed. Her newfound sense of independence and self-reliance made her stronger, both mentally and emotionally. People in the village began to notice the change in her. They admired her quiet confidence and the way she handled challenges with grace.

Her father, Raghav, who had always been protective, noticed the transformation in his daughter. One day, he asked her, "Meera, what has changed? You are no longer the girl who depended on everyone else. You have become a woman of strength."

Meera smiled softly, looking at him with newfound clarity. “Papa, I have realized that the greatest strength is not in relying on others, but in learning to rely on myself. When I am alone, I am never truly alone. I have found the best company in my own heart.”

Years passed, and Meera became a pillar of strength in the village. She helped others, not because she needed validation, but because she had the power to do so. Her life was a testament to the fact that true peace and strength come from within and that when we learn to embrace our own company, we are never truly alone.

I am never alone when I am there with me.



The Wisdom of the Stalled Clock



In the vibrant city of Jaipur, amidst the hum of daily life and the scent of blooming marigolds, there lived a man named Raghav. He was a renowned watchmaker, known not only for his skill in crafting beautiful timepieces but also for his wisdom. His small shop, nestled in a narrow lane near the Hawa Mahal, was filled with clocks and watches of all sizes—some antique, others modern, but all with a story to tell.

Raghav had inherited his shop from his father, who had been a meticulous and highly respected watchmaker. His father, Arvind, had always emphasized the importance of precision. “Time waits for no one, Raghav,” he would often say, “and a watch must reflect that truth. Always be right, never make mistakes.”

As a young boy, Raghav had admired his father’s dedication and perfectionism. He spent countless hours observing him work, learning the craft with deep reverence. But as he grew older, Raghav began to notice something. Despite all his efforts to be flawless, despite being exact with every tick and tock, there was a certain restlessness within him. His obsession with being right, with perfection, often left him frustrated and anxious.

One afternoon, a man came into Raghav’s shop. He was a regular customer, an elderly gentleman named Prakash, who always enjoyed chatting with Raghav while waiting for his watch to be repaired. This time, however, Prakash seemed lost in thought, his usually jovial face etched with worry.

“Prakash ji, what troubles you today?” Raghav asked, sensing something was off.

Prakash sighed and sat down on the chair opposite Raghav. “Ah, Raghav, life seems so complicated these days. I’ve spent my whole life trying to make the right decisions, and to be right in everything I do. But lately, I’ve been wondering if it’s all worth it. Being right doesn’t seem to bring peace.”

Raghav, who had always taken pride in being exact and correct, found himself nodding in agreement. He, too, had felt the weight of always needing to be right. But Prakash’s words made him pause. Was being right the ultimate goal in life?

“I’ve been thinking about this a lot lately, Prakash ji,” Raghav said slowly. “You see, I’ve spent my entire life perfecting every watch and clock. I’ve always strived for accuracy, for precision. But recently, I’ve realized that even when a clock is wrong, it’s right twice a day.”

Prakash raised an eyebrow. “What do you mean by that?”

Raghav smiled and pointed to an old, seemingly forgotten clock on the wall of his shop. It was a beautiful piece, but its hands were stuck at 3:15. “This clock,” Raghav explained, “may not work properly most of the time, but twice a day, when the actual time is 3:15, it’s absolutely correct. Even in its stillness, in its imperfection, it is right.”

Prakash leaned forward, intrigued. “So, you’re saying that perfection isn’t everything? That even being wrong can have moments of rightness?”

“Exactly,” Raghav said. “Life, too, is like that clock. We often get caught up in the idea that we must always be right, but sometimes, it’s the journey, the quality of our actions, that matters more than

the exactness of being correct. If we focus too much on being right all the time, we miss out on the beauty of growth, of learning, and of accepting the imperfections in ourselves and in others.”

Prakash smiled, a light returning to his eyes. “I think I understand, Raghav. Life isn’t just about winning every argument or making the right decisions all the time. It’s about embracing the moments when we are right and learning from the moments when we are wrong.”

Raghav nodded. “Yes, Prakash ji. And sometimes, being kind, being compassionate, being patient—that is the right thing to do, even if the world around us expects perfection. It’s the quality of our actions, not just the correctness, that defines who we are.”

In the days that followed, Raghav continued to work on his timepieces, but something had changed within him. He no longer sought perfection at the cost of his peace. He began to appreciate the process, the learning, and the moments of growth that came with each challenge. And just like the stalled clock on his wall, he learned that even in moments of stillness or imperfection, there was beauty and truth.

And so, in the heart of Jaipur, Raghav’s shop became a place not only for repairing watches but also for sharing wisdom. People came to him not just for the perfect timepiece but for advice, comfort, and a reminder that life was more than just being right—it was about living with intention, with heart, and with grace.

It’s not just about being right, the quality of that being right matters. Even a stalled clock is right twice every day!



The Journey of Arvind



In the tranquil town of Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu, nestled among lush paddy fields and ancient temples, there lived a young man named Arvind. He was the son of a simple farmer, known for his determination and quiet strength. Growing up, Arvind always had a deep connection to nature, the green fields, and the rivers that flowed nearby. But beyond the beauty of his surroundings, there was something else that stirred within him—a longing for something more.

Arvind had always been an ambitious boy. He dreamed of building a better life for himself and his family. As soon as he finished his studies, he decided to leave Kumbakonam and move to Chennai to seek greater opportunities. His parents, though reluctant, supported his decision, believing that Arvind's potential could only be fully realized in a bigger city.

But the city was not kind to him. Chennai, with its towering buildings and fast-paced life, was a world apart from the calm and simplicity of his village. Arvind found work as a junior manager in a manufacturing plant, but it wasn't easy. The hours were long, the work monotonous, and the city felt overwhelming. He had imagined success would come quickly, but instead, he found himself facing daily struggles—his dreams slipping further away with each passing day.

One hot summer day, after yet another exhausting meeting, Arvind walked back to his small apartment in a quiet neighborhood on the outskirts of the city. The scorching sun beat down relentlessly, the air thick and heavy. The streets were crowded, the honking of

vehicles filled the air, and everything seemed to be moving too fast. Arvind felt like a tiny speck, overwhelmed by the enormity of it all.

He sat on a bench near his apartment, drenched in sweat and fatigue, and thought about his father's farm back in Kumbakonam. He thought about the simple life, the quiet mornings with the sun rising over the rice fields, and the cool breeze that greeted him as he walked along the riverbank. He had always been happy there, but now, all he had was this concrete jungle.

Feeling defeated, he called his father that evening.

“Appa, I’m struggling here,” Arvind said, his voice tinged with frustration. “I thought coming to Chennai would change everything, but it’s harder than I imagined. I don’t know how much longer I can keep going.”

There was a long pause on the other end of the line. Then his father spoke, his voice steady and calm.

“Arvind, remember this: Life, much like the journey through a dry desert, is not always easy. The heat, the thirst, the weariness—all of it is temporary. If you simply don’t quit, and keep walking, one day, you’ll find yourself in the greens and woods and by the riverbanks. Your persistence will take you there, son.”

Arvind was silent, taking in his father’s words. His father had always spoken in simple, profound terms, but these words struck him deeply. The path he had chosen wasn’t easy, but his father’s wisdom reminded him that it was in the most challenging moments that one’s character was truly forged.

For the next few weeks, Arvind carried that advice with him. He woke up earlier, pushed through the tough days, and focused on the task at hand. Slowly, he began to see a shift. His hard work didn’t go unnoticed. He was given more responsibilities at work, and eventually, a promotion. The challenges didn’t disappear, but Arvind found himself dealing with them more confidently.

Then, one day, after a particularly difficult project was completed successfully, Arvind found himself standing on the balcony of his apartment, gazing at the city skyline as the sun began to set. The air was still thick with humidity, but there was a sense of accomplishment in his heart. He had kept walking, even when things seemed unbearable.

At that moment, Arvind realized that the dry desert wasn't just the tough phase of life—working in a city far from home, struggling to make ends meet—it was the process of growth itself. Every step he took, no matter how difficult, was a step closer to the “greens and woods” he had longed for. Success wasn't just about the destination—it was about the resilience, the lessons, and the strength he gained along the way.

A few years later, Arvind returned to Kumbakonam, but this time, it was different. He had not only achieved success in his career but had also built a strong foundation for his future. As he stood by the riverbank, watching the calm waters flow, Arvind knew that his journey—both the struggles and the triumphs—had brought him to this peaceful moment of fulfillment.

His father's words had proven true. The desert had been a necessary passage, but the greens, the woods, and the riverbanks awaited him on the other side, not as a destination, but as a reflection of his own perseverance.

If you simply don't quit and keep walking through the dry and hot desert, at some point you ought to get in the greens and woods and river banks!



The Invincible Spirit of Shubham



In the small town of Alibaug, nestled along the western coast of Maharashtra, lived a young man named Shubham. He was a man of ambition, known throughout the town for his unwavering determination and dedication to his goals. His father, Bhaskar, was a farmer who had built their small estate from the ground up, teaching Shubham the value of hard work and perseverance.

However, Shubham always dreamed of something bigger. While his friends were content with their lives in the village, Shubham had always envisioned himself making an impact beyond the fields. He wanted to go to Pune, study engineering, and perhaps work for one of the top tech companies. But the road ahead seemed long, and the challenges immense. His family, while supportive, didn't have the resources to send him to a big city.

“I want to be like those who make a difference in the world, Appa,” Shubham often said to his father. “But I feel like I’m just a small fish in a big pond.”

Bhaskar would smile and put a hand on his son’s shoulder. “Shubham, becoming invincible is not about being born with everything. It’s about not stopping, no matter how hard the journey is. The road may be tough, but that’s where you will find your true strength.”

Determined to prove his father right, Shubham took a decision that would change the course of his life. He began preparing for the engineering entrance exams, despite the lack of resources. He

studied under the dim light of a small oil lamp, using old textbooks and notes from friends who had already studied at colleges in Pune.

The days were long, and the nights even longer. Shubham's resolve was tested constantly. There were moments when he felt exhausted and defeated, wondering if it was all worth it. There were nights when his stomach growled with hunger, as his parents didn't have much to spare. But through it all, Shubham refused to stop. He remembered his father's words, "Don't stop making an effort until you sweat and fall down. And even when you fall, get up and restart."

The months went by, and Shubham worked tirelessly. He was often the last one to leave the small study hall in the village, his eyes bloodshot but his spirit unwavering. But the weight of the world on his shoulders seemed unbearable at times. One particularly exhausting evening, after yet another failed mock test, Shubham collapsed on the floor of his small room, overwhelmed with exhaustion.

For a moment, he thought of giving up. Maybe his dreams were too big. Maybe he wasn't cut out for this. But then, as he lay there, he remembered his father's words again. "Get up before the count of 10 and restart." Shubham wiped away his tears, stood up, and with a fresh resolve, he picked up his books once again.

The journey to Pune wasn't easy, but Shubham's effort never faltered. He would wake up at 4 a.m. to study, sacrifice his weekends to attend coaching classes, and even help his father on the farm during breaks. There were days when he felt like giving up, but each time, he would hear his father's voice echoing in his mind: "Don't stop. Get up before the count of 10."

Finally, after months of relentless hard work, Shubham achieved his dream. He not only passed the entrance exams but did so with flying

colors, securing a seat at one of the top engineering colleges in Pune. His family was overjoyed, and his village took pride in the young man who had defied the odds. However, Shubham knew this was only the beginning. Once in Pune, the challenges didn't stop. College life was overwhelming at first—new subjects, tough exams, and intense competition. But Shubham remembered the four simple steps his father had taught him:

1. **Don't stop making an effort until sweating and falling down.**
2. **Get up before the count of 10 and restart.**
3. **Succeed.**
4. **Take up the next tough goal.**

With each setback, Shubham got up stronger and more determined. Did he fail an exam? He re-studied and worked harder. Are you struggling with a project? He sought help, learned from his mistakes, and came back better. His ability to persevere, to push himself beyond his limits, made him stand out among his peers.

After completing his degree, Shubham's hard work paid off when he landed a job with one of India's top tech companies. He returned to Alibaug not only as a success but as a symbol of resilience. His family, his town, and even the small study hall where he had once sat day after day were all witnesses to the power of determination.

Shubham's journey didn't end with just one success. He set higher goals, pushing himself to learn new skills, take on more responsibilities, and aim for leadership positions. He knew that life would always present tougher challenges, but with the mindset of never giving up, he felt invincible.

One evening, as Shubham sat with his father in their small farmhouse, watching the sunset over the fields, Bhaskar turned to

him and said, “I always knew you could do it, son. You never stopped, even when it was tough. You are invincible, not because you never fell, but because you always got back up.”

Shubham smiled, looking at the horizon. “I learned from the best, Appa. It’s not about being perfect; it’s about the willingness to get up again and again.”

And so, Shubham’s story became a legacy in Alibaug—a tale of resilience, perseverance, and the invincible spirit that can only be forged through effort, setbacks, and unwavering determination.

Being Invincible is a simple 4 step process



The Balance of Roses and Hammers



In the heart of Punjab, in the vibrant town of Amritsar, there lived a man named Gurpreet Singh. Gurpreet was well-known in his community for his unwavering strength, wisdom, and the balance he maintained between kindness and courage. The son of a respected farmer, Gurpreet had always been taught to face the world with both gentleness and resolve. His father, Sardar Harjit Singh, had instilled in him the idea that life demanded both roses and hammers.

“Beta,” Harjit Singh would often say, “there will be times when you must offer kindness, and there will be moments when you must stand firm and fight for what is right. It’s not about choosing one over the other; it’s about knowing when to offer the rose and when to raise the hammer.”

Gurpreet’s life, however, had not always been as simple as his father’s advice. While he had inherited his father’s wisdom, he also faced the harsh realities of the world around him. He worked as a community leader and a peacemaker who was often called upon to resolve disputes between farmers, local traders, and even families. Though he was known for his calm demeanor and compassionate nature, there were times when his patience was tested.

One summer, the region was facing a severe drought. The fields were dry, the rivers barely trickled with water, and farmers were struggling to provide for their families. Gurpreet, who had spent his entire life working alongside the farmers, understood their pain. As a respected figure in the village, people often came to him seeking

help, whether it was for guidance, mediation, or sometimes, just a shoulder to lean on.

One particular day, a heated argument broke out between two neighboring farmers, Amarjeet and Karan, over the water rights for their fields. Both men had always been friends, but the dire circumstances of the drought had pushed them to the brink. They stood face-to-face, shouting at each other, their tempers flaring. The other farmers gathered around, and tensions ran high. Gurpreet was called to mediate.

When he arrived, he saw the fury in their eyes, the pain of the drought mixing with old rivalries. He knew this wouldn't be an easy task. As he stepped forward, the crowd fell silent, waiting for him to speak.

“Amarjeet, Karan,” Gurpreet said calmly, his voice steady yet firm, “I know this drought is taking a toll on all of us. But fighting won't bring the rain. We must stand together, not against each other.”

Amarjeet was the first to speak, his face flushed with anger. “What do you know, Gurpreet? We're starving! My family has nothing left. Karan is hogging all the water for himself, and I've nothing to feed my cattle!”

Karan's voice rang out in response. “That's not true! I've been rationing the water, but my land needs more. Amarjeet, you're the one who keeps taking more than your share!”

Gurpreet took a deep breath. He could sense the bitterness and desperation in both men's voices. He walked up to them, each hand carrying both a rose and a hammer, metaphorically speaking. “I carry roses in one hand and a hammer in the other,” he said. “Right now, I offer you the rose of understanding. We are all in this together. We all have families, crops, and livelihoods to protect. But the only way forward is unity, not division.”

The farmers were silent for a moment, but the fire of frustration still burned in their eyes. Gurpreet continued, “But there are times when we must use the hammer to resolve what words cannot. If this dispute continues, we may have no choice but to bring in the authorities. And that would only make matters worse for everyone.”

His words struck a chord. The village elders, who had been silently watching, nodded in agreement. They knew that while peace was always the first option, sometimes a firm hand was needed to stop a situation from spiraling further.

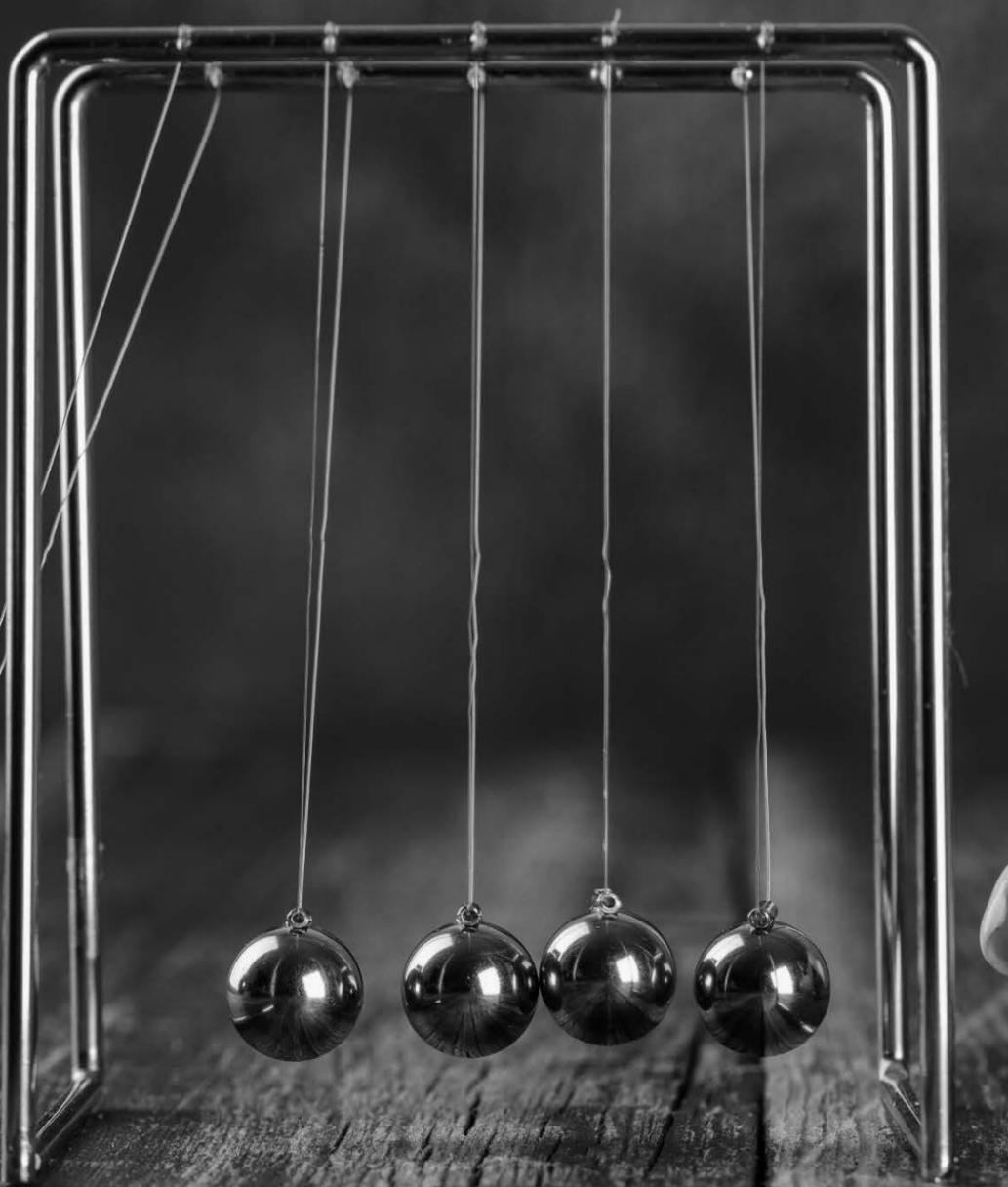
“Let us meet tomorrow,” Gurpreet said. “Together, we will come up with a solution that ensures everyone gets a fair share. But there will be no more fighting. We will resolve this with the rose of compassion and the hammer of fairness.”

The next day, Gurpreet gathered the farmers at the village hall. They sat together and discussed their options, and in the end, they agreed to share the water equally, setting up a rotation system that allowed everyone to have a fair chance. The conflict, which had threatened to divide the entire village, was resolved with understanding, but Gurpreet knew that it had taken both the rose and the hammer to bring peace.

Years later, when the drought had passed and the fields had turned green once more, the story of Gurpreet’s wisdom was told by every elder in the village. He had shown them that while kindness and patience were important, there were times when standing firm and using strength were necessary to preserve what mattered most.

Gurpreet’s legacy lived on as the man who could carry both roses and hammers—someone who knew that true strength came not from choosing one over the other, but from knowing when to use each, in balance, to create a better world.

*I carry roses in one hand and a hammer in the other. Not me, but
clearly the situations and people that I face who I need to deal
with or whom I have to tackle, decide what I use for them*



The Pendulum of Life



In a small monastery perched high in the Tibetan mountains, surrounded by snow-capped peaks and vast stretches of serenity, there lived a monk named Tenzin. Known for his wisdom, calm demeanor, and deep understanding of the world, Tenzin had spent most of his life meditating, praying, and guiding others on their spiritual journeys. His heart was content, but a feeling of restlessness had begun to grow inside him.

Tenzin had dedicated his life to routine. He woke up each morning before dawn, recited prayers, meditated for hours, and spent the rest of his day helping fellow monks and villagers. But lately, as he sat in the monastery's courtyard, watching the rhythm of the pendulum in the old clock that hung on the wall, he began to feel something strange. The pendulum moved back and forth, marking the passage of time with its regular tick-tock, yet the more Tenzin looked at it, the more he felt as if something was missing in his own life.

The clock, old and worn, had been there for as long as anyone could remember. Its steady swing was a symbol of life's unchanging nature, and yet, in its repetition, Tenzin began to feel that it was not experiencing life but merely passing through it. He wondered, **"If this pendulum continues its rhythmic motion every day, without deviation, does it truly understand the value of time? Does it cherish each moment as precious, or is it simply ticking away in mechanical repetition?"**

The more he thought about it, the more Tenzin realized that his life, though filled with purpose, had become much like the pendulum's swing—predictable and repetitive. He had fallen into the comfort of routine, never straying from the well-worn path of prayer and meditation. His spiritual practice had become like the steady tick-tock of the clock—reliable, but devoid of depth and excitement.

One evening, as the monks gathered in the temple for their usual prayers, Tenzin quietly excused himself. He walked down the narrow path leading away from the monastery and into the dense forest that stretched across the foothills. The cold mountain air filled his lungs as he walked, each step seeming to take him further away from his predictable life.

After hours of walking, Tenzin came upon a small village nestled in a valley. The people here lived simply, with a deep connection to the land. Their lives were far from the routine that Tenzin had become accustomed to, and yet, there was something extraordinary about their existence. Tenzin met an old woman named Lhamo, who invited him to stay with her for the night.

As they sat around a fire, Tenzin asked her, “How do you find meaning in your daily life? How do you keep your spirit alive in the midst of routine tasks?”

Lhamo smiled, her weathered face glowing in the firelight. “Routine can be a beautiful thing,” she said. “But it’s the intention behind the routine that gives it meaning. Each action, no matter how simple, carries the possibility for mindfulness. I do not simply chop wood; I feel the connection to the earth with each strike of the axe. I do not just cook; I pour my love and gratitude into the food, knowing that it will nourish others.”

Tenzin listened carefully. The simplicity of her words struck a chord within him. He had never seen life this way. For years, he had been focused on the destination—achieving spiritual enlightenment, seeking wisdom—but he had neglected to truly live in the present moment, to experience each breath, each task, with full awareness.

The next morning, Tenzin left the village with a new understanding. As he walked back to the monastery, he realized that his own life had been like the pendulum—repetitive, yet missing the essence of truly experiencing each moment. He had been ticking through life, but now, he was determined to live with intention, to savor each experience, and to make every action meaningful.

Back at the monastery, Tenzin approached his fellow monks. He gathered them in the courtyard and shared his revelation with them. “Life is not just about repeating the same actions day after day,” he said. “We must find purpose in each moment, even in the most mundane tasks. If we live mindlessly, we are no better than the pendulum, simply swinging back and forth without ever truly experiencing the richness of life.”

From that day on, Tenzin’s life—and the lives of the monks—changed. They still followed the routines of their practice, but now they did so with a new sense of awareness. The act of sweeping the courtyard, offering prayers, and meditating became more than just tasks to check off. Each moment was infused with purpose and mindfulness. The pendulum in the monastery’s clock continued to swing, but Tenzin no longer saw it as a symbol of mechanical repetition. He saw it as a reminder to live fully in each moment, to embrace the present, and to never simply “tick through” life.

In time, Tenzin became known not only for his wisdom but also for his vibrant energy and presence. He was no longer a monk merely going through the motions—he was a living embodiment of what it meant to truly experience life. And in that, he found the deeper meaning he had been searching for all along.

Just doing the same mediocre repetitive thing again and again over and over doesn't sum up to a rich experience! if it did, then the pendulum of a clock would have become so preciously experienced as the clock got older and older.



The King, the Sadhu, and the Power of Listening



In the heart of Rajasthan, nestled among golden sands and ancient forts, ruled King Rajveer Singh, a man known far and wide for his valor and wisdom. His kingdom flourished under his rule, and his court was filled with ministers, soldiers, and sages who sought his guidance. Yet, for all his power, there was one thing that eluded him—true understanding.

King Rajveer was a man of action, always quick to offer advice and solutions. His mind was sharp, and he prided himself on being able to solve problems quickly. However, this speed often led him to miss out on the deeper nuances of the issues at hand. He was constantly formulating his responses, even when others spoke, waiting for his turn to assert his wisdom.

One day, while traveling through the hills surrounding his palace, Rajveer encountered a wandering Sadhu named Vidhur, known for his deep insight and serene wisdom. The Sadhu was sitting by a river, absorbed in deep meditation, surrounded by the tranquility of nature. Intrigued, King Rajveer decided to pay him a visit, hoping to gain some spiritual knowledge.

As he approached, the Sadhu opened his eyes and greeted him with a warm smile. “Ah, King Rajveer, welcome,” the Sadhu said, his voice calm and gentle. “What brings you here?”

Rajveer, feeling both curious and confident, replied, “I have heard of your wisdom, Sadhu. My kingdom is flourishing, yet I feel there

is something missing. People seem to talk to me, but I don't always understand what they truly mean. I want to become a better ruler, one who can truly listen and understand."

The Sadhu smiled again, but his eyes twinkled with understanding. "You seek to listen, but are you truly listening?" he asked.

Rajveer, surprised by the question, answered quickly, "Of course, I listen! I hear everything that is said in my court."

The Sadhu nodded thoughtfully, then asked, "When people speak to you, do you hear only their words, or do you listen to the meaning behind those words? Or perhaps, are you already preparing your response while they speak, thinking of what to say next, instead of truly listening?"

Rajveer paused. He had never thought of it this way. As a king, he had always been expected to respond quickly, to solve problems, and give orders. He realized that he often didn't listen deeply, but was instead preoccupied with his own thoughts and replies.

The Sadhu continued, "Most people, even those who seem to listen, are often busy preparing their response in their minds. They miss the opportunity to truly understand. True listening is not about waiting for your turn to speak; it's about being fully present, letting the words enter your heart, and understanding the essence of what is being said."

Rajveer, humbled by the Sadhu's words, asked, "But how can I learn to listen better? How can I silence my mind and truly hear others?"

The Sadhu stood up, gesturing for the king to follow him. They walked together to the edge of the river, where the water flowed peacefully, its surface reflecting the clear sky above.

“Let me show you something,” the Sadhu said, picking up a small stone and tossing it into the river. The water rippled, creating waves that disturbed the calm surface.

“The ripples of the water are like the noise in your mind,” the Sadhu explained. “When you are caught up in your own thoughts, in your need to respond or solve the problem, you create disturbances. The waters of your mind are no longer still, and you cannot truly listen.”

The Sadhu then gestured to the stillness of the river. “But when you allow your mind to settle, when you let go of the need to reply, the waters become calm. In that stillness, you can see clearly. This is how you must listen—without the disturbances of your own thoughts.”

Rajveer stood in silence, watching the river. He could feel the truth of the Sadhu’s words sink into his heart. It wasn’t just about hearing; it was about being present and allowing the space for true understanding to emerge. The king had always been in a rush to solve problems, to assert his authority. But he now realized that to truly lead, he needed to learn the art of listening—not just to the words of his people, but to the deeper emotions and intentions behind those words.

For the rest of the day, Rajveer stayed with the Sadhu, practicing the art of listening. As the sun set behind the hills, he thanked the Sadhu for opening his eyes. “I will carry this lesson with me, Sadhu. I will learn to listen, not just with my ears, but with my heart. I will stop rushing to reply and instead, be fully present in each moment.”

The Sadhu smiled kindly. “True wisdom lies not in speaking, but in listening. A king who listens will rule with compassion, and a heart that listens will understand the needs of the people.”

As Rajveer returned to his palace, he began to change. He became a king who not only heard the voices of his people but understood their deepest needs. His court transformed into a space of dialogue and trust, where everyone's voice mattered. And though he still led with strength and resolve, Rajveer's greatest power lay in his ability to listen.

Most people while they look like listening, they are wasting the opportunity to Listen by being busy preparing in mind their reply.



The Teacher's Paradox



Vikram Rathi, a man of great success, had achieved everything one could dream of. At 50, he was a respected entrepreneur, running a flourishing business empire and living in a mansion that overlooked the skyline of Mumbai. His wealth and influence seemed limitless, and yet, despite all his accomplishments, a certain unease gnawed at him.

He had often felt that something was missing—something he couldn't quite put into words. There was a paradox that seemed to linger at the edge of his thoughts. On one hand, he noticed how people around him were constantly longing for change. They were tired of the monotony, the predictability, and the repetitiveness of daily life. They sought new experiences, new opportunities, and new adventures. They were in a constant chase for something different, something more exciting.

But on the other hand, Vikram found another group of people, including himself, who seemed resistant to change. They clung to stability, to the familiar, to what they knew. Every time he considered making a change—whether in his business or his lifestyle—he found himself hesitating. He feared losing control, fearing that change might unsettle the balance he had worked so hard to create. This paradox was frustrating, and it left him puzzled.

One day, while attending a high-powered business conference in Mumbai, Vikram found himself reflecting on this paradox again. He was walking through a quiet park near the venue, trying to clear his mind, when something unusual caught his attention—a frail,

elderly man sitting on a bench, his face lined with deep wrinkles, his white beard flowing down to his chest. There was something familiar about the old man's presence, something peaceful and wise. As Vikram passed by, their eyes met.

The old man smiled softly. "You look troubled, young man," he said, his voice gentle but firm. "Tell me, what is it that weighs on your mind?"

Vikram paused. There was something about this man that drew him in, so he sat down beside him. "I've been successful in life, yet there's this question that I can't shake off," Vikram confessed. "The world seems to be divided into two groups. One group constantly longs for change, for something new, something different. The other, like me, resists it. I can't understand why this paradox exists. Why do we crave change, yet fear it at the same time?"

The old man chuckled softly, his eyes twinkling with knowing. "Ah, you've been pondering a very old paradox," he said, stroking his beard thoughtfully. "It's a question as old as time itself, and it's one that many have struggled with."

Vikram looked at him, intrigued. "But why is it so difficult to resolve? Why does change seem to be both a desire and a fear at the same time?"

The old man nodded, as if he had been waiting for this moment. "When you were a young student, did you ever ask yourself why you went to school every day, even when you didn't feel like it? You were studying the same subjects, reading the same books, following the same routine. And yet, what did you hope to achieve?"

Vikram thought back to his school days. He remembered his childhood teacher, an elderly man, who had once asked the class a very similar question. That teacher had been a mentor to him, someone who had inspired Vikram to dream big. But Vikram had never fully understood his teacher's wisdom at the time.

“I wanted to learn,” Vikram replied slowly. “I wanted to improve myself.”

“And yet,” the old man continued, “you did so not because of the monotony or the routine, but because you understood that the end goal was something worth pursuing. It was the foundation that gave you the strength to build what you have now.”

Vikram nodded, remembering the sense of purpose he’d felt during his youth.

“Now,” the old man said, “let’s think of change in the same way. People resist change because they fear what it might disrupt. They fear what they know might be lost. But change is not about throwing away what is important; it’s about adding something new to what already exists. Those who seek change often want to enrich their lives, but they forget that true change begins with understanding the value of what they already have.”

Vikram was silent, absorbing the old man’s words.

“Think of a river,” the old man continued. “It never fears change because it understands that its path is always flowing, always moving. It only fears stagnation. Change, like the river, is not something to fear. It is a natural part of life that keeps things fresh, dynamic, and alive. But to move forward, you must first embrace the present. Understand it, respect it, and then change will come with ease.”

Vikram sat there for a long time, pondering the simplicity yet profound nature of what the old man had said. The paradox had always seemed complex, but in that moment, it became clear. The tension between change and stability was not a paradox to be solved but a balance to be embraced. To live fully, one needed both—the stability of roots and the freedom of growth.

Vikram looked at the old man with deep gratitude. “I understand now. It’s not that we must reject change, nor should we resist it. We

must learn to understand when it is the right time for it and embrace it with wisdom.”

The old man smiled warmly. “Exactly. And now, you can go back to your life with a clearer mind. The key to success is not in avoiding change but in understanding how to use it to enrich your journey. Remember, change is not your enemy. Fear of change, and the resistance to it, is what stands in your way.”

As Vikram stood up to leave, he felt a new sense of clarity. The road ahead was still uncertain, but he now understood that he could navigate the balance between stability and change with purpose and wisdom. He thanked the old man deeply before walking away, the paradox no longer a mystery, but a lesson learned.

*It's quite an intriguing paradox that, half the world says, "feeling boring things being monotonous" as they seem longing for a change"
And, at the same time, the remaining half trying to study
"Resistance to Change".*



The Bridge of Second Chances



Rajeev Deshmukh had lived a life that most would call tragic. Born into a poor family in a small village in Maharashtra, he had known nothing but hardship from an early age. His father had passed away when he was just a boy, leaving his mother to raise him and his two younger siblings alone. The family struggled to make ends meet, and Rajeev had to take on odd jobs from a young age to help out. School was a distant dream, and his childhood was filled with humiliation and rejection.

He was an awkward, skinny boy who was always picked on by the other children. They made fun of his clothes, his accent, and his mannerisms. He never felt like he belonged anywhere. The world seemed to constantly remind him of his worthlessness, and for many years, he believed it.

As he grew older, Rajeev tried his hand at various ventures, but each one ended in failure. His first business was a small fruit stall, but it went bankrupt within a year. His second attempt, a small clothing shop, failed due to his lack of experience. He was on the verge of giving up when something inside him snapped.

He realized that no one would ever hand him success on a silver platter. He had to fight for it. He couldn't afford to stay the victim anymore. He couldn't keep blaming the world for his failures. He had to change his mindset.

Rajeev decided to take the stones that had been pelted at him throughout his life—the taunts, the failures, the betrayals—and use them to build a fort. A fort of resilience, of strength, and of belief in himself. He started his third business with nothing but the lessons

he had learned from his previous failures. Slowly but surely, he turned things around. Over the next decade, he built a successful company, becoming one of the most respected entrepreneurs in Mumbai. People admired him, not just for his wealth, but for his grit and determination.

Yet, despite his success, Rajeev never spoke much about his struggles. His journey was painful, and he had always believed that his success spoke for itself. He preferred to keep the past buried, hidden from the world. But life has a strange way of pushing people to face their past in the most unexpected ways.

One evening, as Rajeev was traveling home from a business meeting, his driver, Arvind, took a familiar route over a bridge that spanned the sea. The setting sun painted the sky in shades of orange and pink, a peaceful sight, but something caught Rajeev's eye that made his heart skip a beat.

At the edge of the bridge, a man was standing on the railing, his hands gripping the sides as if preparing to jump into the vast, churning waters below. Without a second thought, Rajeev shouted at Arvind to stop the car.

“Stop! Stop the car, quickly!” he ordered.

Arvind immediately pulled the car to the side of the bridge, and Rajeev didn't wait a moment longer. He rushed out of the car and sprinted toward the man, who had not noticed his presence. With every step, Rajeev's mind raced. Was it too late? Would he make it in time? He had seen enough news reports to know that sometimes, people in despair make decisions in the blink of an eye.

Reaching the man, Rajeev grabbed him by the arm, yanking him back from the railing just as the man's foot lifted to make the fatal jump. The man let out a startled gasp, struggling against Rajeev's grip, but Rajeev held on tightly, his experience of never giving up on anything coming into play.

“Let me go! I don’t want to live anymore!” the man cried; his voice choked with tears.

Rajeev pulled him away from the edge, guiding him to the sidewalk of the bridge. Once they were both seated on the concrete, Rajeev looked at the man, who seemed to have completely given up on life.

“What’s your name?” Rajeev asked gently.

“Vikram,” the man replied, his face buried in his hands.

“Vikram, listen to me,” Rajeev began, his voice calm but firm. “I know what you’re going through. I’ve been where you are right now—feeling like the world has nothing to offer, feeling humiliated, feeling like you’ve failed over and over again. But I’m here to tell you that you don’t have to let this define you.”

Vikram looked up; his eyes red with tears. “How do you know? How do you know what it feels like to lose everything? To feel like you’re invisible?”

Rajeev took a deep breath. “Because I’ve been there. I was just like you—lost, humiliated, and filled with failures. But I didn’t let those failures define me. I used the stones pelted at me to build my fort. I took my vulnerabilities, my fears, and my threats of survival, and I made them my strengths. I used them to fuel me, to push me harder, and to get back up every time I fell. That’s how I became who I am today.”

Vikram looked at him in disbelief, as if trying to understand how someone could rise from such depths. Rajeev continued, “I know it seems impossible right now, but the hardest part of life is getting back up after you fall. Every time you fall, you’re given a chance to start again, to write a new chapter in your story. You have the power to choose how your story ends, and I’m telling you, this is not the end.”

Vikram sat silently, letting the words sink in. For the first time in months, he felt a flicker of hope. The despair that had gripped him so tightly began to loosen its hold.

Rajeev gave him a reassuring smile. “You can’t erase the past, Vikram, but you can control how you move forward. Life isn’t about waiting for things to change; it’s about changing yourself. Don’t let your past failures define your future. Use them. Learn from them. Grow.”

After a long pause, Vikram finally spoke, his voice trembling. “I don’t know if I can do it. It feels so hard.”

Rajeev placed a hand on his shoulder. “You don’t have to do it alone. You just have to take the first step. And then, when you fall again—and you will—you just get up. And keep going. I promise you; the journey is worth it.”

As Rajeev stood to leave, Vikram looked up at him, his face now softer, a glimmer of determination in his eyes.

“Thank you,” Vikram said quietly.

Rajeev smiled, knowing that the fire he had ignited in Vikram’s heart would help him fight for a better tomorrow. And as he walked back to his car, he felt a sense of peace. He had once been in Vikram’s place, but now he knew that life’s greatest victories come not from avoiding failure, but from overcoming it.

I used the stones pelted at me to build my fort.

*Used vulnerabilities and survival threats to make them my
differentiating strengths.*



The Last Bullet



Sandeep affectionately called by almost all youth-time friends Sandy and some call him Rambo, is a man of many dimensions, had always been an enigma to his friends and colleagues. A civilian by profession, but with an unmatched mindset that often made his armed forces friends call him "a civilian by accident." Thanks to his life that was been shaped by a series of extraordinary good bad bitter & sour very uncommon experiences—some of which few could even imagine.

Born and raised in a modest family in Pune, Sandeep had a calm demeanor and a thirst for knowledge. But his journey was anything but typical. After completing his studies, he was drawn to spirituality, got pulled to reading a lot of Swami Vivek and, J. Krishnamurthy lectures & preaching, and got attracted to the vicinity and influence of Sadhus- Sanyasi-s and Monk-s for several years. The peacefulness and discipline of the monastic life gave him profound insight into the mind, body, and spirit. This also led him to feel confused about the balance between materiality and spirituality – also became a lot more disinterested in worldly things. However, all that push pull, and walk on the thin rope raised his intense interest in enlightenment. It also gave him answers about where to be forgiving and where to be aggressive. It built his mind's inner strength as well as pushed him to become bodily strong as he understood what is being fearless and wanted to be fearless, strong yet kind and empathetic to that became the core of his existence.

However, destiny had other plans. At the peak of his spiritual journey, an unexpected call from an old friend who served in the Indian Army changed the course of Sandeep's life. His friend had asked him to join a covert operation to provide strategic guidance and emotional support to soldiers on the frontline. The transition was jarring but fortunately, he was already on the path to finding the right balance with a deeper understanding of the harsh realities of the physical world and his deep desire to unite with God. From hours of serene meditation to the chaos of battlefield planning, Sandeep found himself caught between two worlds—one that sought peace and another that demanded vigilance and aggression.

Years passed, and Sandeep became a master at balancing both his monastic discipline and his strategic military mindset. He was a monk by heart but a soldier when duty called—a rare blend that set him apart from the rest. His friends in the armed forces admired him for his calm in the face of danger and his tactical brilliance in the most perilous situations.

One particular evening, Sandeep found himself in a tense situation that would test everything he had learned in life. He had been visiting a remote military outpost along the border, where tensions had escalated in recent days. While there, a small group of soldiers had been ambushed by an enemy squadron during a routine patrol.

Sandeep, despite not wearing military fatigues, had been called upon to provide support in this desperate situation. He was not officially part of the armed forces, but his mind was sharp, and his sense of situational awareness was unparalleled. By the time he arrived at the scene, the soldiers were pinned down in a small trench, their ammunition running low.

Sandeep surveyed the battlefield with a quick glance. His mind, trained in both spirituality and combat, immediately began

calculating the next moves. The enemy had the upper hand, but their numbers were limited. The soldiers were on the brink of exhaustion and fear. They had fired several rounds in retaliation, but the enemy continued to press their attack. The situation looked grim.

As Sandeep crouched beside the commanding officer, Captain Raghav, he saw the desperation in the man's eyes.

"Sir," Captain Raghav said, his voice shaky, "we have one bullet left in our last rifle. What should we do? If we use it, we'll be out of ammo. And if they attack again..."

Sandeep placed a hand on Raghav's shoulder and spoke calmly, "You're thinking too much about the end. This is not about the last bullet—it's about making them think we have more."

Captain Raghav was confused. "What do you mean, sir?"

Sandeep surveyed the enemy's position again. "If you fire that last bullet, they'll know you're out. You'll have nothing left to defend yourselves with. But if you make them think you still have more bullets, they will hesitate. And that hesitation is what we need to create an opening."

Raghav's brow furrowed, but Sandeep continued with quiet confidence, "Take the shot but don't fire to kill. Fire to make them believe you're a threat. Aim wide, aim high, but make sure they hear the sound of the shot. Make them believe you're still in the fight."

Raghav hesitated for a moment, but he trusted Sandeep's instincts. With a deep breath, he aimed and fired the last bullet into the air, the sound echoing through the night.

The enemy, just a few hundred yards away, flinched at the shot. They knew the soldiers had limited ammo, and now they weren't

sure how many more rounds were left. The moment of uncertainty was all Sandeep needed.

“Now’s our chance!” he barked.

Sandeep moved swiftly, guiding the soldiers to use their remaining grenades to create a diversion. The enemy, still unsure of how much resistance they would face, faltered for a moment—just long enough for the soldiers to regroup, push back, and launch a counterattack. Within minutes, the ambush turned in their favor.

By the time reinforcements arrived, the enemy had retreated, their morale shattered. The soldiers had survived, thanks to the quick thinking of a monk who understood the value of psychological warfare. The soldiers were shaken, but grateful. They had faced certain death, and yet, they had come out victorious.

Captain Raghav, who had once doubted the wisdom of a civilian in military matters, looked at Sandeep with awe. “You saved us, sir. But I still don’t understand. How did you know?”

Sandeep smiled, his gaze calm and unwavering. “It’s not about the number of bullets you have. It’s about how you use the last one. Never fire it unless you know for sure you don’t need any more. In the most testing situations, the key is not to give the enemy the satisfaction of knowing you’re out of options. Make them believe you have many more, even if you’re down to your last.”

The soldiers were in stunned silence, the weight of Sandeep’s words sinking in. This wasn’t just a lesson in survival—it was a lesson in mindset, strategy, and the power of perception.

Sandeep had become more than just a monk and a soldier. He had become a symbol of resilience, balance, and wisdom. His friends from the armed forces would continue to call him "a civilian by accident," but deep down, they knew that Sandeep was a rare

breed—someone who could handle desperate situations with the poise of a monk and the sharpness of a soldier. His mindset, his awareness, and his ability to handle life-and-death scenarios had saved countless lives and would continue to inspire those around him.

Never fire that last bullet unless you know for sure you don't need any more bullets. In the most adverse testing situation if at all you have to, ensure the enemy is made to believe you have many more!



The Tiger's Hunger



Sandeep sat in his cozy study, its shelves lined with books on philosophy, strategy, and life experiences collected over decades. The aroma of chai drifted through the air as he turned to face a young man seated across from him. The man, Arjun, was one of his most promising mentees, but today his face was clouded with frustration and doubt.

"Sandeep sir," Arjun began, his voice tinged with despair, "I feel like I've tried everything. I've worked hard, stayed disciplined, and even taken risks. But success keeps evading me. It's like I'm stuck in quicksand. What am I doing wrong?"

Sandeep leaned back in his chair, his silver hair catching the afternoon sunlight streaming through the window. His eyes were calm, but his presence was magnetic, radiating wisdom born from years of navigating life's complexities.

"Arjun," he said, "you remind me of myself when I was your age—full of energy but sometimes lost in the maze of ambition and impatience. Let me tell you a story."

Arjun sat up, eager to listen. He knew Sandeep's stories always held the answers he sought.

The Tale of Two Hunters

"There were once two hunters, both equally skilled but vastly different in their approaches. One would sit quietly in the dense forest, blending with nature, waiting for his prey to approach him. His patience was unmatched, and often, he would return home with a bountiful catch simply by allowing the forest to bring the animals to him.

The second hunter was fiery and restless. When he grew hungry, he couldn't sit still. He would track his prey tirelessly, moving through the jungle with relentless determination. Even when the prey was elusive, his persistence usually paid off.

Both hunters succeeded, but not in the same situations. The first hunter thrived in times when the forest was abundant and nature was on his side. The second found his strength when the forest grew quiet, and food became scarce. Each one adapted to the situation at hand."

Arjun furrowed his brow. "But sir, which hunter should I be?"

Sandeep smiled; his gaze steady. "That depends on the jungle you're in, Arjun. Life is not one jungle; it's a series of ever-changing terrains. Sometimes, the circumstances align in your favor, and success comes to you effortlessly, like the prey approaching the patient hunter. But at other times, life will test your resolve. In those moments, you must be the tiger—a predator that chases its goal relentlessly, even if it's been hungry for days."

Arjun nodded slowly, understanding beginning to dawn on him. "So, I need to adapt to the situation?"

"Exactly," Sandeep replied. "One shirt of strategy does not fit all seasons of life. Sometimes, you must attract success by staying where you are, being calm and strategic, and letting the right moment come to you. But when the time isn't on your side, you must respond by chasing success with the determination of a tiger that has gone hungry for days in the jungle."

The Lesson in Action

Arjun left that day with a new clarity in his heart. He began to evaluate his situation carefully. In the weeks that followed, he realized he had been trying to chase opportunities in an industry that wasn't ready for his innovative ideas. Instead of pushing harder, he decided to shift gears, refining his skills and building connections while waiting for the right moment to strike.

Months later, when the industry's landscape shifted, Arjun pounced on the opportunity like the tiger Sandeep had described. His persistence paid off, and he achieved a breakthrough that had once seemed impossible.

Arjun often reflected on Sandeep's words:

"If luck supports you, you succeed early. Sometimes you need to stay where you are and attract success. But if the time is not playing on your side, success tests you. You must respond by chasing and hunting the success like a tiger that has gone hungry for days in a jungle."

Those words became his guiding mantra, shaping his decisions and fueling his growth.

Over time, Arjun became a success story in his own right, but he always credited his transformation to the wisdom of Sandeep, the man who had taught him that success is not just about effort but about knowing when to wait and when to act.

And somewhere in his quiet study, Sandeep smiled, knowing he had once again lit a fire in another soul.

*If luck supports you, you succeed early. If the time is not playing
on your side success tests you*

*You must respond by chasing & hunting the success like a tiger
that has gone hungry for days in a jungle*



The Wisdom of the Little Seed



In a small village nestled among lush green hills, there lived a wise old man named Dadaji. Respected by everyone in the community, he was often sought for advice and guidance. Despite his calm demeanor and years of experience, Dadaji found himself unusually restless one evening. A problem that seemed simple at first had grown complex, eluding his seasoned mind.

He sat on the verandah of his home, staring into the twilight sky, lost in thought. His five-year-old grandson, Aarav, came running to him, his tiny feet pattering against the floor. Aarav loved spending time with Dadaji and could sense when something wasn't right.

"Dadaji, why do you look so worried?" Aarav asked, his large, curious eyes filled with concern.

Dadaji smiled weakly and patted Aarav on the head. "It's nothing, beta. Just a little problem I can't seem to solve."

Aarav climbed into his grandfather's lap. "Tell me, Dadaji. Maybe I can help."

Dadaji chuckled. He didn't expect a solution from a child, but he decided to share anyway, thinking it might lighten his heart. He explained his dilemma in simple words, outlining the choices and the obstacles he faced.

Aarav listened intently, nodding as if he were a sage himself. When Dadaji finished, Aarav looked at him with an innocent smile and

said, “Why don’t you just do *this*?” He then laid out a solution so simple, so logical, that Dadaji’s jaw dropped in amazement.

“How did I not see this?” Dadaji muttered to himself. He hugged Aarav tightly, marveling at how effortlessly the child had untangled what his own experience and wisdom could not.

The next day, a villager named Ramesh came to Dadaji for advice. Ramesh was overwhelmed by his own challenges and had lost hope. After listening patiently, Dadaji shared the story of Aarav.

“You know, Ramesh,” Dadaji said, “yesterday, I learned a powerful lesson from my little grandson. I was so stuck in my way of thinking that I forgot to stay open to new perspectives. Aarav’s simple yet profound solution reminded me of something important.”

Dadaji picked up a handful of soil from a nearby pot and let it crumble through his fingers. “Be like this soil—well plowed, soft, and ready to receive the seed. You never know from where the seed will come or when the rain will bless it. It could come from someone you trust, or from an unexpected source. Answers can emerge when you least expect them, but only if your mind is open.”

Ramesh looked at Dadaji, visibly moved. “So, what should I do?”

“Sometimes, you speak with chosen people for advice,” Dadaji said. “Sometimes, you speak to yourself and reflect. At other times, you must simply listen—to nature, to the universe, and to God. The key is to remain optimistic and receptive. Help and solutions can come from the most unexpected corners, just like my grandson taught me.”

As Ramesh left, his heart lighter, Dadaji sat back on his verandah, watching Aarav play in the yard. He whispered a silent prayer of gratitude, realizing that wisdom isn’t confined to age or experience.

It flows freely, like a seed carried by the wind, ready to sprout wherever it finds fertile ground.

From that day on, Dadaji made it a point to keep his mind and heart open, knowing that answers could come from anyone, anywhere—even from the smallest voice of a child.

To get answers, and advice sometimes I speak with the chosen people, sometimes to myself, sometimes to nature, universe, and God!



The Wings to Fly Beyond Gravity



In a quiet village near the Godavari River, there lived a kind-hearted man named Venkatesh, fondly called Venkatanna by everyone in the village. He was known for his wisdom and calm demeanor. His greatest joy in life, however, was his nine-year-old daughter, Kavya, a bright but timid little girl who loved climbing trees but never dared to climb too high.

One sunny afternoon, Kavya and Venkatanna were in the backyard, where a tall mango tree stood. Kavya loved mangoes but often relied on her father to pluck them for her. Today, as Venkatanna plucked a ripe mango, he noticed Kavya staring at the tree with longing.

“Kavya,” he said, handing her the mango, “why don’t you try climbing up a little higher to get the fruit yourself?”

Kavya looked at the tree, her face turning pale. “But, Nanna, what if I fall?”

Venkatanna smiled, sitting down under the tree, and gesturing for her to join him. “Come here, Ammulu. Let me tell you something important.”

Kavya sat beside her father, clutching the mango.

“Do you know, Kavya, what makes birds fly so high in the sky?”

Kavya thought for a moment and replied, “Their wings?”

“Yes, their wings,” Venkatanna said. “But it’s not just their wings. It’s their courage to leap into the air and trust themselves. If birds

worried about falling, they would never leave their nests. And just like birds, we too must learn to spread our wings and rise above fear.”

Kavya listened intently; her eyes wide with curiosity.

“Fear of falling is like the gravity that pulls you down,” Venkatanna continued. “If you let fear control you, it’s like gravity ruling your life. But what if you decided not to let it? Fear of a fall ceases as ceases the existence of gravity! You can rise above it, Ammulu. Don’t waste your life worrying about a fall. Instead, grow stronger and wiser each time you try. Spread your wings to fly high, beyond the pull of gravity.”

Kavya looked at her father, unsure. “But, Nanna, what if I fall?”

Venkatanna placed a gentle hand on her shoulder. “Falling is part of the journey, Kavya. What matters is not avoiding the fall but having the strength in your mind and body to get up again. Each fall teaches you how to climb better, how to balance, and how to grow. Never let fear drive you, my dear. Instead, let courage lead the way.”

The next day, Venkatanna found Kavya standing under the mango tree, her hands gripping a low branch. She looked up at the tree and then back at her father, who stood a few steps away, watching her with an encouraging smile.

“I’ll try, Nanna,” Kavya said, determination flickering in her eyes.

“That’s my girl,” Venkatanna said.

With shaky hands and wobbly legs, Kavya began climbing. She slipped once but caught herself, and instead of looking down, she focused on the next branch. With each step, she felt her confidence grow. Finally, she reached a high branch laden with mangoes.

“Nanna!” she called out excitedly. “I did it!”

Venkatanna laughed and clapped. “See, Ammulu? You’ve spread your wings today.”

As Kavya climbed down with a mango in hand, she felt a new sense of pride and courage.

Years later, Kavya often recalled that moment under the mango tree when life presented her with challenges. She remembered her father’s words whenever she faced fear.

And every time she overcame an obstacle, she would whisper to herself, “Fear of a fall ceases as ceases the existence of gravity. Don’t waste life avoiding a fall—spread your wings and fly beyond it.”

Kavya grew up to become an adventurer, conquering mountains and crossing rivers, inspiring everyone with her fearless spirit. She often credited her father, Venkatanna, for teaching her that life isn’t about avoiding falls but about learning to rise above them.

Fear of fall ceases as ceases the existence of gravity!! Don't waste life avoiding or worrying about a fall but, grow by spreading wings to fly high beyond gravity.



The Multiplication by Zero



In the serene Himalayas, nestled in a quiet monastery. There lived a wise and calm guru named Acharya Dharmadeva. Many young disciples from across the land came to learn from him, seeking wisdom, clarity, and purpose. Among them was Arun, a bright but restless soul, constantly wrestling with questions about life's meaning and his true purpose.

One evening, as the sun dipped behind the mountains, bathing the monastery in hues of gold and orange, Arun approached Acharya Dharmadeva. The guru was seated under a large peepal tree, meditating, his silhouette glowing in the evening light.

“Guruji,” Arun said hesitantly, breaking the silence.

Dharmadeva opened his eyes slowly and smiled. “Come, my child. Speak your heart.”

Arun sat at his feet and began, “Guruji, my mind is restless with confusion. At times, I dream of being a brave warrior, defending my nation and earning glory. At other times, I feel I should become a monk like you, dedicating my life to helping the souls around me. Sometimes, I long for wealth and luxury, imagining how much good I could do with riches. And then, I think of living a simple, minimalistic life, free from endless desires. Please tell me, which path should I choose? Which of these is better for me to pursue?”

The guru looked at Arun, his expression calm and knowing. He closed his eyes for a moment, as if gathering his thoughts, and then spoke.

“Arun, tell me, have you ever watched a grand play in a theater?”

“Yes, Guruji,” Arun replied. “Many times.”

“In a play,” the guru continued, “there are kings and beggars, heroes and villains, victors and defeated. Each plays their role, and the audience claps for all. But tell me, my child, what happens when the curtains fall?”

Arun pondered for a moment and replied, “When the play ends, everyone, regardless of their role, leaves the stage. They are no longer kings or beggars; they are just actors.”

Dharmadeva nodded, his eyes twinkling with wisdom. “Exactly, Arun. Life is much the same. Whether you are rich or poor, a warrior or a monk, a winner, or a loser—when the final curtain falls, everything stands multiplied by zero.”

Arun listened intently, the weight of those words settling over him like a warm blanket.

The guru continued, “The roles you play in life matter only for the moment. What truly matters is *how* you play them. Play your role with integrity, compassion, and dedication. Whether you choose to be a warrior, a monk, a wealthy man, or a simple villager, ensure your actions bring peace to your heart and good to the world. Ultimately, what remains is not your title or wealth but the legacy of your deeds and the love you spread.”

Arun’s eyes welled with tears. “Guruji, does that mean it doesn’t matter what path I choose?”

“It means,” Dharmadeva said, placing a gentle hand on Arun’s shoulder, “that you should choose the path that resonates with your soul. Live it fully, without regret, and remember, the value of life lies in the present moment, not in its labels or achievements.”

From that day on, Arun found peace in his heart. He stopped chasing the perfect identity and focused on living every day with purpose and gratitude. Whether he became a warrior, a monk, or a simple man, he knew his worth would not lie in the role but in how he played it.

As the years passed, Arun often shared his guru's words with others:

“When the curtains fall, everything stands multiplied by zero. So, live your role with honor, love, and purpose.”

Winner or loser villain or hero. When curtains down, everything stands multiplied by zero.



The Master of Both Games



In the heart of Mumbai, where cricket isn't just a sport but a way of life, there lived Ravi Deshmukh, a legendary cricketer who had once been the pride of India. Ravi had been the poster boy of Indian cricket in his prime—a fierce batsman, a sharp fielder, and an impeccable strategist. His career spanned two glorious decades, during which he had won countless matches and hearts. But what made Ravi special was not just his talent on the field—it was his ability to stay calm in the storm, to read the game like an open book, and to inspire his teammates to rise above challenges.

Years later, after hanging up his boots, Ravi could have led a quiet retired life. But destiny had other plans. He became a mentor and life coach, guiding not just budding cricketers but people from all walks of life. His small, cozy office in a Bandra suburb often saw a mix of young professionals, struggling entrepreneurs, students, and even homemakers, all seeking clarity and guidance. Ravi had become a lighthouse for those lost at sea.

One day, a young man named Aryan came to see Ravi. Aryan, a corporate employee in his late twenties, looked anxious and restless. “Sir,” Aryan began, “I’ve been following your career since I was a child. Your guidance has changed so many lives. But I have to ask—how does a cricketer become such a great life coach? Cricket is just a sport, isn’t it?”

Ravi smiled, leaning back in his chair. “Ah, Aryan, that’s where you’re wrong. Cricket, like any other skill or profession, is not just a sport—it’s a school of life. Let me explain.”

He gestured for Aryan to sit down and continued, “In cricket, you learn when to attack and when to defend. You understand which deliveries to leave alone and which ones to hit. It teaches you patience, timing, and discipline. Isn’t life the same? You have to know when to take risks and when to step back. Sometimes, you face situations like bouncers—you duck or deflect them. And sometimes, you must deal with temptations, much like a juicy delivery outside off-stump. You resist, not because you don’t want to hit it, but because it’s a trap.”

Aryan listened intently, nodding. Ravi continued, “And sledding? It’s like the challenges or negativity thrown at you in life. You either ignore it or use it to fuel your performance. Then there’s the time when you’re at the top of your game—life is smooth, and everything works in your favor. That’s when you must stay humble and grounded. And when life throws you out of the team, when you’re down and out, that’s when you learn resilience, how to bounce back stronger. Every single ball in cricket teaches you something about life if you have the mind to learn.”

Aryan seemed captivated, his earlier doubts fading. “Sir, what about when life becomes unpredictable? When it feels like it’s toying with you?”

Ravi chuckled softly. “That’s when you turn the tables, my boy. I always say, treat life like a game. Sometimes you’re the player, and life is the toy. Other times, it’s the other way around. The key is to keep playing. Know when to respect life’s challenges, when to bow down, and when to playfully take control. If life toys with you, toy back. It’s a game of balance—just remember to stay in the game.”

Aryan leaned forward; his face now lit with inspiration. “And what about failure, sir? What if I try and still fail?”

Ravi’s expression softened. “Aryan, failure is just another delivery in the over of life. Some you miss, some hit you, and some you knock

out of the park. The point is to stay on the crease. You only lose when you stop playing.”

Aryan smiled, feeling a newfound clarity. As he stood to leave, Ravi patted his shoulder. “Remember, Aryan, life, like cricket, is a game of strategy, timing, and mindset. Stay in the game, learn from every ball, and never forget—you’re here to play, not to quit.”

That day, Aryan walked out of Ravi Deshmukh’s office with a lighter heart and a stronger resolve. As he left, Ravi glanced at the wall in his office, where a plaque hung with his favorite words etched into it:

"Life and I play a game. Sometimes I'm the player, sometimes the toy. The game continues until we're both in it—so I keep playing, always ready for the next delivery."

It's a game between us.

Life and I play, even toy with each other.

*Sometimes life is a player and me the toy and the remaining time
the other way around!*



From Tears to Triumph



I stood in front of the packed auditorium, looking at the sea of expectant faces. The applause had just died down, and it was my turn to speak. I had been invited to share my journey—how I had transformed from an insecure, introverted, and defeated individual into someone admired as a fearless, inspiring leader.

I took a deep breath and began, "The person you see standing before you wasn't always this way. If you'd met me two decades ago, you'd have found a different person altogether. I was someone who constantly lamented the unfairness of life, blamed circumstances, and found excuses for my failures. I was introverted, cowardly, and drowning in feelings of inferiority. Mediocrity was my comfort zone."

The audience leaned in, curious. I continued, "But every transformation needs a trigger. Mine came on a night when I hit rock bottom. It was one of those nights when the world feels heavy, and you feel small and powerless against it. I was sitting alone, crying over another failure. I felt hopeless, helpless, and utterly broken.

And then, from somewhere deep within me, a voice emerged—louder than my sobs, sharper than my doubts. It wasn't gentle or comforting; it was commanding, almost scolding. It said, *'If you're going to lose water from your body, why waste it on tears? Lose it in sweat, or even blood if needed, but get up and rise!'*

That was my turning point."

The room was silent. I could see people resonating with my words. I went on, "That night, I promised myself that I would no longer be a victim of circumstances. I would take ownership of my life, no matter how unfavorable the odds seemed. I realized something profound: Mediocre people are kind and lenient to themselves but demanding and ruthless toward others. They excuse their shortcomings with elaborate justifications but expect others to deliver results regardless of constraints.

Outstanding individuals, however, are the opposite. They are brutally demanding of themselves and empathetic toward others. They take ownership of their failures instead of shifting blame. They don't wait for favorable circumstances; they create them. They don't just lament about the mountains blocking their path—they climb them. If climbing isn't possible, they dig tunnels, carve paths, and blaze trails for others to follow."

I paused to let the words sink in. "Back then, I realized that I needed to stop being kind to my mediocrity. I had to become my own toughest critic and my strongest ally. I stopped focusing on the dark clouds and started looking for the silver linings. When life pelted me with stones, I used them to build my foundation. My vulnerabilities? I turned them into my differentiating strengths.

And it wasn't easy. Every step of the way was a battle—against fear, self-doubt, and the temptation to give up. But as I took ownership of my life, something incredible happened. I began to see results. I grew stronger, more confident, and more secure. I became someone who could inspire others to rise above their mediocrity and reach for greatness."

I looked around the room, locking eyes with individuals who seemed lost in thought. "Today, when people ask me what changed, I tell them: I stopped waiting for life to treat me kindly. I started treating life like a challenge I was born to conquer. The world didn't owe me anything, but I owed it to myself to rise above my circumstances.

So, to anyone sitting here, feeling stuck or defeated, I say this: Your transformation will come when you stop blaming the storm and start building your ark. Don't waste your tears on what you've lost. Sweat for what you can still achieve. And if you're willing to bleed for your dreams, then nothing—absolutely nothing—can stop you from reaching them." Tears are water, Sweat is also water, and blood also is made in water. choose which water you want to shed and the outcomes will change accordingly!

As I finished, the room erupted into applause. I smiled, thinking back to that helpless boy I once was. I was so glad that he had listened to the voice inside him. Without that voice, I wouldn't have become the person I was today—a person who no longer feared life but embraced its challenges with open arms.

And as I walked off the stage, I silently thanked that broken, weeping version of myself. Because sometimes, the greatest leaders are forged in the fire of their greatest weaknesses.

Shed sweat...

Not tears!



The Unseen Victory



In a small village in Uttar Pradesh, there lived a man named Arvind. He was known for his selfless nature and his drive to uplift others. Whether it was his fellow farmers, his friends, or even strangers, Arvind was always there to lend a hand, always working hard to see those around him succeed. His joy lay in seeing others rise, in seeing them win, no matter the cost to himself. He believed deeply in the power of supporting others, even if it meant sacrificing his own happiness or standing in the shadows.

One day, a young man named Shyam came to Arvind seeking guidance. Shyam was a talented wrestler, known for his strength and skill, but he was troubled by an inner darkness that seemed to hold him back. His father, who had once been a great wrestler himself, had passed away, leaving Shyam with a heavy legacy and immense pressure to live up to his name.

Arvind, seeing the potential in Shyam, took him under his wing. He trained him every day, sharing every piece of knowledge he had accumulated over the years. His aim was simple: he wanted to see Shyam win, to see him carry forward his father's legacy with honor. Arvind didn't care about the spotlight. He didn't care about receiving any recognition. His joy was in the victory of the person he helped. Shyam, on the other hand, began to grow resentful.

Shyam couldn't understand why Arvind was so selfless in his efforts. "Why would you sacrifice so much for me? You don't even seek anything in return," Shyam would ask, confused by Arvind's intentions. But Arvind simply smiled and said, "If my joy, my aim,

my effort is to see you win, then I will play for that. Nothing more, nothing less."

However, over time, Shyam began to feel jealousy and anger. The villagers started to praise Arvind for his unwavering support and selflessness. Shyam, rather than being grateful, began to resent the attention Arvind was receiving. He started to believe that Arvind was trying to outshine him, even though that was never Arvind's intention. Shyam's internal struggles grew, and slowly, the person who had once admired Arvind began to view him as a competitor, someone standing in his way.

Despite Arvind's constant support, Shyam started making attempts to undermine him. He spread rumors, tried to humiliate Arvind, and even accused him of sabotaging his chances. Every effort Arvind made to see Shyam succeed was met with rejection, bitterness, and attempts to tarnish his reputation.

But Arvind, despite the hurt and betrayal, refused to give up on Shyam. He continued to stand by him, to offer guidance, to push him towards victory. Each time Shyam attempted to wound him with words or actions, Arvind would feel the sting of the betrayal, but he understood the bigger picture. He knew that Shyam was like an animal in distress—angry, confused, and lashing out because he didn't understand the help being offered.

There came a day when the final wrestling match was upon them. It was the event that would determine whether Shyam would rise above his legacy or fall to the weight of it. Arvind, watching from the sidelines, saw Shyam's determination, but he also saw the pain and resentment in his eyes. The game, the battle, had turned into something much more complicated than it should have been. Arvind knew that he had done all he could. His goal had always been to see Shyam win, to see him rise to the occasion and bring honor to his father's name.

But Shyam, driven by his own internal turmoil and anger, still carried the desire to hurt Arvind. As the match unfolded, it became clear to Arvind that no matter how much he had given, Shyam's focus was no longer on winning but on defeating him, on hurting him in every way possible. It was then that Arvind made a choice. He wouldn't let the pain or the wounds Shyam inflicted on him deter him from his original goal. He had come to see Shyam win, not to fight him.

As the match ended, Shyam emerged victorious, but not in the way Arvind had hoped. His victory was hollow, tainted by the bitterness he had carried throughout the battle. Arvind, despite the hurt, stood tall. The game had always been between the two of them, and though Shyam had won, Arvind had achieved his own victory in a different way.

He looked at Shyam and, with a quiet resolve, said, "The game was only between us both. We both got the outcome we wanted. I had come to see you win, and you only wanted to see me wounded, hurt, defeated. But in the end, I still played for your victory."

Arvind walked away; his heart heavy yet full of clarity. He knew that sometimes, no matter how much you try to help someone, they may not understand your intentions, and they may lash out in return. But that didn't mean you should stop trying. It didn't mean you should abandon your goal of helping them rise. Just as you would rescue an animal that might wound you in the process, you continue the fight for their betterment, knowing that the true victory lies in the effort itself, not in the outcome.

The game was only between us both. We both got the outcome we wanted. Because I had come to see you win and you only wanted to see me defeated!



The Wisdom of Discretion



In the small town of Bilaspur, nestled along the banks of the Yamuna River in Uttar Pradesh, there was a wise old man named Shankarji. Known for his balanced approach to life and his deep understanding of human nature, he had lived through countless challenges, learning over the years that life's true wisdom lay in navigating the delicate balance between action and restraint.

Shankarji often shared his thoughts with the younger generation of the village, especially with his protégé, Arjun. Arjun was a kind-hearted young man who believed in helping others, and he often found himself caught in the complexities of making decisions—whether to engage in conflicts, help those who were ungrateful, or simply let things go when they seemed beyond his control.

One evening, after a long day of work, Arjun sat with Shankarji at the edge of the river, troubled by the recent events in the village. There had been an argument between two families over the use of the communal well, and Arjun had tried to mediate. But instead of gratitude, he had been met with hostility from both sides. The villagers, who once respected him, now saw him as someone who had failed them.

"I don't understand, Shankarji," Arjun confessed. "I tried to help both families, I wanted to bring peace. But now, they're both angry at me. One side thinks I favored the other, and I don't know where I went wrong. I wanted to do right by everyone."

Shankarji, sitting quietly for a moment, let the words hang in the air, the sound of the flowing river the only background noise. Finally, he spoke.

"Arjun," he said, "life is full of paradoxes. You must understand that there are times when helping others means standing firm, but there are also moments when helping others means stepping away. It's not always clear at first. The sweet spot of balance—the true poise—is often determined by timing, circumstances, and the stakes involved."

Arjun looked at him, confused. "But Shankarji, how can I decide when to stand firm and when to step back? Both families were depending on me to fix things. If I had only made the right choice, things might have turned out differently."

Shankarji smiled kindly. "The challenge is, Arjun, that there is no universal 'right.' What may be right for one person in one moment might not be right for someone else. In the same situation, your 'right' may not even be the best path for yourself at a different point in time. If you are not aligned with someone else, if your directions are different, then your rights will not be the same as theirs. And even when you both face the same challenge, your perspectives on what is right can shift with time, experience, and new insights."

He paused for a moment, watching the water. "Think of it like this: where, and what to let go, and where to extend acceptance, is a matter of wisdom. And where to put a foot down, and decline to compromise, is just as crucial. But that choice is not always clear, and it must remain a wise discretion. It requires the ability to step back and assess what truly matters."

Arjun listened intently, his mind racing with thoughts. Shankarji continued, "In situations where you face opposition, where your intentions are misunderstood, you may feel the weight of expectation

from others. But you must know that in some cases, it is okay to walk away. You cannot be expected to stay dug-in when the cost of staying is too high. You have the right to say, "This situation, this cause, is no longer worth my sacrifice."

"But," Arjun interjected, "doesn't that make me look weak? Shouldn't I fight for what's right, even if it means bearing the pain?"

Shankarji gave a soft laugh. "Strength is not about never stepping back; it's about knowing when to do so. There are times when staying in a situation, holding your ground in a standoff, can harm you more than walking away. Sometimes, leaving the battlefield is the strongest decision you can make. It doesn't mean you've given up, but that you have used wisdom to understand your limits."

Arjun thought about this deeply, the wisdom sinking in. "So, you're saying it's about knowing when to let go and when to stand firm. But it's not always easy to decide, is it?"

Shankarji nodded. "Exactly. The path is not always clear. It's a balance that is unique to each situation. There will be times when helping others means being firm, and there will be times when it means stepping aside, knowing your involvement would only worsen things. As you move through life, you must develop this wisdom, this ability to discern what truly matters."

Arjun sat quietly for a while, letting Shankarji's words wash over him. He realized that helping others didn't always mean doing everything for them. It didn't mean he had to bear the brunt of their anger or misunderstandings. It meant understanding when his presence could make a difference, and when it was time to let go and allow the situation to unfold as it would.

In the weeks that followed, Arjun began to apply this wisdom. There were times when he had to stand firm, refusing to compromise on what he believed was right. And there were times

when he had to step back, understanding that the battle was not his to fight. Each decision was difficult, but with Shankarji's guidance, Arjun learned to trust his instincts, to weigh the circumstances, and to find the balance that felt right for him.

Where, and what to let go, and extend- expand acceptance.

And where to put a foot down,

And decline to compromise.

Is, and must remain a wise discretion!



The Lesson of the Rain



In the bustling town of Shibpur, West Bengal, there lived a distinguished professor named Dr. Arunava Banerjee. He was a man of deep wisdom and sharp intellect, renowned not only for his expertise in literature but also for his ability to impart life lessons to his students. His classroom was not just a place for academic learning; it was where students came to learn the art of living well.

One rainy afternoon, as the monsoon clouds darkened the skies and the air became thick with the promise of rain, Dr. Banerjee stood before his class, preparing for one of his usual thought-provoking lectures. Among his students was Priya, a bright young woman who had always been deeply engrossed in the pursuit of knowledge. However, like many of her peers, she often found herself lost in the multitude of details—insignificant facts and irrelevant data—that crowded her mind. She would often get so wrapped up in these distractions that she forgot to focus on what truly mattered.

On this particular day, as the first raindrops began to fall outside, Dr. Banerjee looked out the window and smiled, sensing an opportunity to teach his students a valuable lesson.

“Today, I want to speak about something more than just literature or the sciences,” he said, his voice calm and steady. “I want to speak about a lesson that can serve you far beyond these walls. It is a lesson that can help you focus on what truly matters in life.”

The students, including Priya, sat up a little straighter, intrigued. Dr. Banerjee continued.

“Look outside the window, children,” he said, pointing to the sky where dark clouds were breaking, and the first drops of rain splattered against the earth. “Can you smell the fragrance of the rain?”

Priya, like many others, smiled faintly as she caught the familiar scent of the monsoon. It was a refreshing, earthy smell, the smell that always brought her a sense of peace and nostalgia.

“That fragrance,” Dr. Banerjee said, “has a name—Petrichor. A beautiful name, isn’t it? But let me ask you something: Do you need to know that the fragrance is called Petrichor to enjoy it?”

The room was quiet, and Priya thought about it. She didn’t need to know the technical term for the fragrance to appreciate it. It was enough to simply experience the joy it brought her.

“No, Professor,” Priya responded, realizing the depth of the question. “I don’t need to know its name to enjoy it.”

Dr. Banerjee nodded. “Exactly, Priya. The essence of the fragrance is what matters, not the name. Sometimes, we get so lost in the pursuit of knowledge and the endless need to label everything that we forget to simply experience life. We get bogged down by the clutter—the unnecessary details—and we miss out on the beauty that surrounds us.”

He paused, allowing his words to sink in. “The problem is, many of us treat the pulp and the peel of fruit with the same importance. We focus on things that don’t really matter, while missing the essence, the core. Just as you don’t need to know the name of the rain’s fragrance to enjoy it, you don’t need to become obsessed with the small, insignificant parts of life. It’s the core—the experience, the real essence—that should matter.”

Priya, sitting quietly, felt a deep realization. She had spent so much of her life focusing on the small things, the trivial details, often getting lost in the overwhelming flood of information. She had neglected the simple joys, the moments that could truly bring peace and fulfillment.

Dr. Banerjee smiled knowingly as he observed his students, many of whom were now deep in thought. "It is important to train our minds to cut through the clutter and focus on what really matters," he continued. "If we don't, we'll find ourselves obsessed with things that don't contribute to our happiness or growth. Life isn't about knowing every single fact or detail. It's about understanding the bigger picture, the deeper truths that exist beneath the surface."

After the lecture, Priya walked home, her mind swirling with the professor's words. As the rain continued to fall, she took a moment to stop and close her eyes, letting the fragrance of the rain fill her senses. She didn't need to know its name. She simply needed to experience it, to enjoy it for what it was.

In the days that followed, Priya made a conscious effort to apply Dr. Banerjee's lesson. She began to focus on what truly mattered—the core of her studies, the essence of her relationships, and the simple joys of life. She trained herself to cut through the clutter, to not get overwhelmed by the insignificant details that once consumed her.

One day, as she was walking by the Ganga with her friends, she found herself pausing to watch the river flow. The sound of the water, the cool breeze, the distant calls of birds—it all felt so perfect. She smiled to herself, realizing that the joy wasn't in understanding the scientific intricacies of the river or the technicalities of the breeze. It was simply experiencing the moment.

In that moment, Priya understood the truth of Dr. Banerjee's lesson: *To experience life fully, we must learn to focus on what truly matters and let go of what doesn't. Sometimes, we don't need to understand everything; we simply need to feel and enjoy the beauty of what's around us.*

For one to feel the joy of the fragrance of the first rain of the season, he doesn't need to know that, the smell of rain is called Petrichor.



The Path of Discovery



In the vibrant fields of Punjab, beneath the towering Gurudwara of Harmandir Sahib, lived a man named Gursewak Singh. Gursewak was a man who had seen the full spectrum of life. His journey had been far from easy, shaped by countless experiences that had tested him, broken him, and rebuilt him into the person he had become—a man of peace, self-assurance, and quiet strength.

Gursewak was born in a small village near Amritsar, to a humble Sikh family. In his youth, he was soft-spoken and unsure of himself. Like many others in his community, he was taught to live by the values of humility, respect, and selfless service, but he had always felt disconnected from the deeper meaning of these principles. His early years were marked by a desire to prove himself, and to live up to the expectations that the world placed upon him. He thought that life was about succeeding in the eyes of others, following the paths laid down by society.

As a young man, Gursewak left his village and moved to the busy city of Chandigarh to pursue higher education. Life in the city, however, was a harsh contrast to his peaceful village upbringing. He faced financial struggles, encountered false friends, and often found himself questioning the choices he had made. His idealism clashed with reality, and the more he tried to climb, the more obstacles seemed to appear in his path.

Through all this, Gursewak never gave up. Though he sometimes thought of returning home and abandoning his dreams, something inside him urged him to keep going. He remembered the teachings of his elders: “*Vaheguru will never give you more than you can bear.*” And so, he walked on, through the challenges, through the doubts, through the bitterness of failure, and the sweetness of small victories.

He had encountered people who seemed to care for him, only to later reveal their true intentions. He had discovered that not all who called themselves friends were truly his well-wishers. But at the same time, he had found unexpected support from those he least expected—strangers who extended kindness when he had none left to give. There were nights spent alone in the cold, hungry and thirsty, but there were also days filled with the warmth of genuine connections and quiet moments of joy.

Over time, Gursewak’s journey began to shift. He no longer worried so much about what the world thought of him. He realized that his purpose was not defined by others’ expectations but by his own inner convictions. His beliefs were fluid, and he found himself oscillating between a strong sense of spirituality and periods of doubt. At one point, he had questioned the very existence of a higher power, but in the quiet moments of reflection, he had started to feel a connection—one that was not based on rituals or dogma, but on a deep sense of peace and purpose.

Gursewak’s moments of doubt and belief had taught him something profound: life is not about having all the answers, but about walking through it with a sense of integrity and clarity. He began to see that the struggles were not there to break him but to teach him.

One evening, while sitting at the edge of a quiet field near his village, watching the golden rays of the setting sun reflect off the vast expanse of mustard fields, Gursewak had a revelation. He understood, perhaps for the first time, that his life was not just about surviving, but about thriving. He had walked through many storms, many doubts, and many failures, but the essence of his life was not found in the success or failure of the moment—it was found in the journey itself.

He had figured out what he truly valued—honesty, kindness, self-reliance, and devotion. And most importantly, he had learned what he was willing to give his life for. He had found clarity on his path and no longer felt restless or uncertain. Gursewak was not searching for answers anymore; he had found his direction, and with that, peace.

Years passed, and Gursewak continued to walk his path, no longer troubled by the weight of the world or the opinions of others. He had reached a place where he knew what mattered and what did not. He was no longer bound by the need to please or prove himself to anyone. His purpose was clear, and his values were unwavering.

One day, as he walked to the Gurudwara, Gursewak paused for a moment to look up at the sky. The sun had just set, and the stars were beginning to shine. At that moment, Gursewak whispered a quiet prayer, “Vaheguru, I have walked the path you set for me, and now I walk with your blessing. The struggles, the joys, the victories, and the defeats—they are all part of this beautiful journey. And I know now, as I keep walking, that it is all worth it.”

With a smile on his face, Gursewak continued his walk, knowing that the joy was in the journey itself. His guiding light was simple but profound: “*It’s a sheer joy reading what I wrote on the sky that made Waheguru smile at me as He says, well played, my boy.*”

And so, Gursewak kept walking, with peace in his heart, knowing that his path was his own, and every step he took was in harmony with his true self.

*It's a sheer joy reading what I wrote on the sky that made God
smile at me as He says, well played my boy!*



The Essence of Leadership



In the bustling city of Chandigarh, a seminar on leadership was held at the prestigious Punjab University auditorium. The event drew a diverse audience—students, professionals, and aspiring leaders—all eager to hear from an exceptional panel of speakers. The panel included retired Brigadier Harjit Singh, former captain of the Indian hockey team Simran Kaur, renowned business magnate Armaan Malik, and revered social worker Gurpreet Kaur. Each was a trailblazer in their own right, with countless accolades and stories of success.

The moderator of the seminar posed a single question to the panel:

"What, in your experience, is the essence of true leadership?"

The Brigadier's Perspective

Brigadier Harjit Singh, a decorated officer who had led his troops through some of the most challenging military operations, leaned forward. His voice carried the weight of years spent in the service of the nation. "Leadership," he said, "is about perspective and timing. In the heat of battle, there are moments when you must climb a hill to get a wider view of the battlefield, understand the terrain, and anticipate the enemy's moves. And then there are times when you must descend and fight shoulder-to-shoulder with your soldiers. Knowing when to take each position makes all the difference.

A leader must also recognize when to use a firm hand and when to be a guiding presence. Whether it's encouraging a frightened soldier or making a tough decision that could mean life or death,

leadership is about balance and clarity. Above all, a leader must embody the values they expect from others—integrity, courage, and dedication."

The Captain's Insight

Simran Kaur, who had once brought glory to the nation by leading the hockey team to a world championship victory, spoke next.

"As a team captain, leadership meant understanding when to be a motivator and when to be a strategist. I often used the analogy of a binocular. Sometimes you have to look through a wide lens to see the big picture—how the team is playing as a whole. Other times, you need to flip the binoculars and zoom in on an individual player to understand their struggles and strengths.

Leadership is also about putting your team before yourself. When the team performs well, step aside and let the players shine. Celebrate their hard work. But when the chips are down, step up and be the one to take responsibility. It's not about being the star; it's about ensuring the team succeeds."

The Business Leader's Philosophy

Armaan Malik, the dynamic CEO of a multinational corporation, nodded in agreement as he added his thoughts. "In the corporate world, leadership often gets mistaken for authority. True leadership, however, is about influence, not control. A leader must create an environment where people feel empowered and valued. Give your team the limelight and the credit they deserve, and you'll see them surpass expectations.

But when the storm comes, don't hide behind the scenes. Be at the forefront, guiding your team with transparency and decisiveness. And never forget—your actions speak louder than your words. If you want your team to be honest and hardworking, you must lead by example. Hypocrisy is the quickest way to lose respect."

The Social Worker's Wisdom

Finally, Gurpreet Kaur, known for her tireless efforts in uplifting marginalized communities, spoke in her soft yet resolute voice. "Leadership is a blend of humility and strength. When working with people in need, you must listen more than you speak. Understand their pain, their needs, and their aspirations. But you must also have the strength to make difficult decisions for the greater good.

A true leader doesn't seek the spotlight. Instead, they shine it on others. When the people you serve succeed, let them take the credit. And when things go wrong, stand tall and take the blame. This balance of humility and accountability is what makes a leader trustworthy."

A Unified Essence

As the seminar progressed, the audience noticed a striking similarity in the answers. Though the four leaders came from vastly different backgrounds, their principles of leadership converged on the same core ideas:

1. **Perspective and Adaptability:** Know when to take a broad view and when to focus on the details. Use the right tools for the right situations.
2. **Balance of Strength and Softness:** Understand when to lead with a firm hand and when to guide with compassion.
3. **Integrity in Action:** Align your words with your actions. Hypocrisy erodes trust faster than anything else.
4. **Selflessness:** Celebrate the success of your team, and take responsibility during tough times.
5. **Visibility in Adversity:** Lead from the front during crises but step back when the team excels.

The Conclusion

At the end of the seminar, the moderator summarized the discussion:

“The essence of leadership, as our esteemed panelists have shared, lies in perspective, adaptability, and selflessness. Whether you’re leading troops, a sports team, a company, or a community, the core remains the same. Leadership is not about being in the spotlight; it’s about making others shine. It’s about being the guiding light that remains steady, no matter the circumstances.”

The audience erupted into applause; their minds enriched with timeless wisdom. The panelists left the stage, leaving behind a lesson that would stay with everyone present: **True leadership is not about power—it’s about purpose, perspective, and people.**

Lead from behind and be almost invisible when the team is doing great

Lead from the front and be right visible more prominent and clearer than anyone behind when going is tough



Recalibrating the Bar: Timeless Lessons on Values & Respect



In the vibrant city of Bengaluru, Sandeep was a mentor whose wisdom and guidance had shaped countless lives. His teachings, deeply rooted in Indian philosophy, emphasized the importance of a growth mindset, self-reliance, and the principles of Karma.

One day, during a high-profile interview, Sandeep shared his insights:

Embrace the Growth Mindset

"A growth mindset," Sandeep began, "is the belief that abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. This view creates a love for learning and resilience essential for great accomplishments."

Understand Control and Detachment

Drawing from the Bhagavad Gita, Sandeep explained, "Focus on your actions and duties but remain detached from the outcomes. This detachment leads to inner peace and freedom from the bondage of Karma."

Avoid Victim Mentality

"Do not indulge in self-pity or blame external circumstances," he advised. "Instead, take ownership of your actions and their consequences. This self-reliance empowers you to overcome challenges."

Practice Detachment and Renunciation

Sandeep emphasized the teachings of Lord Shiva: "Detach from material possessions and desires, understanding their temporary nature. This detachment leads to spiritual growth and inner peace."

Continuous Learning and Adaptability

"In a rapidly changing world," he noted, "it's crucial to continuously learn, unlearn, and relearn. This adaptability ensures that your knowledge and skills remain relevant."

Live in the Present Moment

"Do not dwell on the past or worry excessively about the future," Sandeep advised. "Living fully in the present moment allows you to make the most of your current opportunities."

Cultivate Inner Strength

"Use challenges and adversities as fuel for personal growth," he said. "Develop inner strength to remain steadfast in the face of difficulties."

Maintain Humility and Self-Belief

"Let neither success lead to arrogance nor failure diminish your self-belief," Sandeep counseled. "Maintain humility and confidence regardless of external circumstances."

Seek Inspiration and Inspire Others

"Find role models who inspire you," he encouraged. "At the same time, strive to be a source of inspiration for others through your actions and character."

Sandeep's words resonated deeply with the audience, reminding them of the timeless wisdom embedded in Indian philosophy. His

emphasis on self-reliance, detachment, continuous learning, and humility provided a roadmap for personal and professional growth.

As the interview concluded, Sandeep left the audience with a powerful thought: "In the journey of life, embrace the growth mindset, understand the principles of Karma, and remain detached from the fruits of your actions. This path leads to true fulfillment and inner peace."

The audience departed with a renewed sense of purpose, inspired to apply these principles in their own lives and to contribute positively to the world around them.

On the basis of his or her behavior, thoughts & values, I place the bar where in my eyes hold a person!

And as we go along, keep raising it or lowering it.

When the bar is very high, I bow in respect And, when someone's bar drops very low stop everything else with such a person and, start only ignoring.



The Essence of Balance and Perspective: Sandeep's Inspirational Speech



The picturesque backdrop of Himachal Pradesh, with its serene mountains and lush greenery, set the stage for one of the most memorable speeches ever delivered by Sandeep, a highly sought-after speaker. The packed auditorium of a prestigious college buzzed with anticipation as he stepped onto the podium to share profound lessons drawn from the lives of visionary leaders across the world.

The Speech

Sandeep began with a captivating premise: "Leadership, life, and legacy are all about balance, perspective, and timing. Visionary leaders, whether from the corridors of politics, the arenas of sports, the stages of art, or the helm of businesses, share one essential trait: the ability to navigate complexity with discernment. Today, let's explore what they teach us about preserving, challenging, demolishing, and building."

Lessons on Preservation and Change

"Every leader faces moments where they must decide what to protect and what to challenge. Take Mahatma Gandhi, for example. His preservation of nonviolence as a core principle reshaped India's freedom struggle. But then there's Elon Musk, who challenged and redefined the automotive and space industries.

The art lies in knowing *when* to preserve and protect boundaries and when to transcend them. Some walls shield us, while others imprison us. A boundary preserved too long can stifle growth, but one demolished without foresight can lead to chaos. Leaders like Steve Jobs show us that sometimes, even when a reconstruction plan isn't clear, bold demolition—like scrapping the Apple Newton to pave the way for the iPhone—is necessary. Yet, other times, as with Warren Buffett's careful acquisitions, the absence of a clear plan warrants patience over haste."

Maximizing Gains vs. Minimizing Losses

"Visionary leaders also recognize the duality of maximizing gains and minimizing losses. Arundhati Bhattacharya, the former Chairperson of SBI, expanded opportunities in financial inclusion while safeguarding the bank's stability. Maximizing gains isn't always about bold moves; it's also about stopping the bleeding at the right moment.

Every solution, however, comes with its own set of problems. Globalization solved trade challenges but birthed environmental concerns. The key lesson is that most problems can be addressed, but leaders must anticipate the secondary effects of their solutions."

The Power of Perspective

"Some people focus on finding faults, while others search for the good in every situation. Both perspectives are necessary, but using them appropriately is what matters. Leaders like Ratan Tata have exemplified the art of optimism when driving change, yet embraced pragmatism when mitigating risks."

Sandeep paused for emphasis. "Too little is bad; too much is worse. Consider this: scarcity raises value—gold is precious because it is rare. Overabundance, however, depreciates worth—too much

water in a dam bursts it, creating disaster. This principle applies to everything: resources, relationships, and even your own time.”

The Perils of Fear and Multitasking

"Never let the fear of missing out dictate your choices," Sandeep urged. "Do what you truly want to do, and be where you truly want to be. Fear-based decisions lead to regret.

Multitasking, too, is a double-edged sword. Leaders like Sundar Pichai excel because they know when to focus deeply and when to juggle multiple priorities. Misusing multitasking results in inefficiency and burnout."

The Cycles of Life and Leadership

"Everything has a life cycle—be it success, failure, prosperity, or drought. Where there are oceans today, there were mountains thousands of years ago, and the reverse is true. Leaders must plan with this understanding of impermanence.

Think of peace: it's beautiful, but too much peace can make life monotonous. Similarly, music is only music if it resonates with you; otherwise, it's just noise. Leadership is about navigating these subjective realities."

Human Nature and Its Contradictions

"Man is a selfish animal," Sandeep remarked with a wry smile. "We are the only species capable of lying, pretending, and deceiving. Yet, we are also capable of unparalleled love, compassion, and trust. Leaders like Nelson Mandela harnessed humanity's better instincts to bring reconciliation and healing to a fractured nation."

The Philosophy of Limits and Possibilities

Sandeep shared a profound metaphor: "There is nothing infinite; our inability to perceive the end makes it feel infinite. Conversely,

there is nothing finite because every boundary is part of something larger. Similarly, there is no absolute darkness—it's simply the absence of light. And there is no absolute light—it begins where darkness ends.

This duality is the essence of life and leadership. Great leaders understand that every decision, every action, exists on a spectrum and must be treated with humility and perspective."

The Takeaway

Sandeep concluded with a powerful reflection: "Nature is thrifty—it takes away what you don't use. The mind, the body, and the resources you neglect will atrophy. To lead, you must sharpen your ability to preserve what matters, challenge what limits you, and remain adaptable to change.

Leadership is not about perfection; it's about progress. It's about writing a story so compelling that, when your time is up, the universe smiles and says, *'Well played.'*"

The Applause

The room erupted into applause as the students rose to their feet, inspired and invigorated by Sandeep's words. His insights into balance, perspective, and the cyclical nature of life resonated deeply, leaving an indelible mark on everyone present.

Don't let the suit & the tie you see me in today mislead you! I got inside those clothes by dropping sweat, eating hunger, drinking my thirst, killing the death. And even now, inside that new attire, I still remain with joy & pride the same old sweat -dropping man.



A Father's Wisdom: The Boxer's Journey



In the heart of Manipur, nestled amidst the rolling hills and serene valleys, lived 19-year-old Leiyang. A spirited young woman, she had a singular dream: to win an Olympic gold in boxing for her country. From a young age, Leiyang's swift punches and unyielding spirit caught the attention of her coach, and soon, her small village became witness to her dedication and ambition.

Her family, though modest in means, rallied behind her dream. They tightened their belts, giving up little luxuries to afford her training, equipment, and travel. Her father, Thangmei, a former schoolteacher, was her unwavering pillar of support. He worked extra hours, often staying late at the local school to correct papers and mentor students, ensuring that his daughter never had to compromise on her training.

The Grueling Path

The journey was anything but easy. Leiyang would rise before dawn, practicing her punches against the backdrop of misty mornings. Her hands bled from hours of training, her body ached, and there were days she barely had the strength to rise. She had faced rejection in tournaments, taunts from peers who thought her dream was too big, and moments of sheer despair when progress seemed elusive.

The toughest part, however, was the loneliness. At national-level tournaments, she watched as others had large groups cheering them on, while she had only her father's voice ringing from the sidelines.

The Moment of Doubt

One evening, after a particularly grueling loss in a state championship, Leiyang sat outside their home, staring at the moonlit hills. She had given it her all, but it hadn't been enough. Her faith wavered.

“What’s the point, Papa?” she asked, her voice breaking. “I’m chasing a dream so far out of reach. No one notices. No one cares. Maybe I’m not good enough.”

Thangmei sat beside her, his face calm but resolute. He held her calloused hands, worn from hours of punching the heavy bag, and spoke softly but firmly: “Leiyang, consistency, and belief are hardest when no one is clapping for you. That’s when you must clap for yourself. Always remember, you should be your biggest fan. Your approval, your belief in your story, is what matters most. Do what you do, not for the applause, but to write a story you’ll be proud of. Others will cheer for you eventually, but until then, you must keep going.”

The Turning Point

His words sank deep into her heart. That night, something shifted within Leiyang. She realized that external applause, while uplifting, could never fuel her as much as her own belief could. She decided to become her own cheerleader.

From then on, every training session felt different. She didn’t need a crowd; she clapped for herself. She celebrated her small wins—the speed of her punches improving, her stamina increasing, the rhythm of her footwork.

When she faced setbacks, she would recall her father's words: "*Clap for yourself. Write a proud story of your life.*"

The World Takes Notice

Months turned into years. Leiyang began winning district, then state, and eventually national-level tournaments. Her victories weren't just hers; they belonged to her family, her community, and her state. The girl from a small village in Manipur was now a national sensation.

Her crowning moment came when she qualified for the Olympics. It was a dream she had nurtured through years of blood, sweat, and tears. As she stepped into the ring, representing India on the world's largest stage, she could feel the echoes of her father's advice.

The crowd roared as she fought with grit, precision, and an unshakable will. When the final bell rang, Leiyang stood victorious, an Olympic gold medal around her neck. The applause was deafening, but her heart remained grounded. She knew that her journey wasn't defined by the claps of others but by the belief she had nurtured within herself.

The Legacy of a Father's Words

As the village erupted in celebration upon her return, Leiyang sought out her father amidst the crowd. Handing him the gold medal, she said with a tearful smile, "Papa, this medal is ours. It's your words that brought me here."

Thangmei smiled back, his pride unmistakable. "You wrote your story, Leiyang, and what a story it is. Now, inspire others to write theirs."

From that day on, Leiyang's story wasn't just hers. It became a beacon of hope for young girls across the country, especially in the

Northeast, reminding them that no dream was too big, no struggle too tough, and no applause more valuable than one's own belief.

Consistency is harder when no one is clapping for you. You must clap for yourself during those times, you should always be your biggest fan.



The Monk's Wisdom: The Treasure Within



High in the mountains of Tibet, nestled amidst the vastness of snow-clad peaks and prayer flags fluttering in the crisp air, stood the secluded monastery of Lingsa. It was a place of profound silence, where the winds seemed to carry ancient wisdom, and the stars illuminated truths often hidden from ordinary eyes.

In this monastery lived Tenzing, a revered monk whose serenity was said to calm even the fiercest storms of the mind. People from distant lands traveled arduous paths to seek his counsel. His words, simple yet profound, often transformed lives.

One day, a young seeker named Dorje climbed the steep trails to meet Tenzing. Burdened by restlessness, Dorje yearned for success and happiness but felt trapped in a cycle of frustration and longing. He believed the answers lay somewhere beyond his reach—hidden in the farthest corners of the world.

When Dorje finally stood before Tenzing, he poured out his heart. “Master, I want to be wise, successful, and happy. Tell me where to go and what to do to find what I seek.”

Tenzing smiled gently and gestured for Dorje to sit. As the young man settled, Tenzing spoke: “Dorje, let me tell you a story.”

The Story of the Hidden Treasure

"Many years ago, a wealthy man buried a treasure chest filled with gold, gems, and priceless relics beneath his house. Over time, his family forgot about it. Generations passed, and no one knew of the

fortune that lay hidden beneath their feet. They lived in poverty, constantly searching for wealth outside their home, never realizing they already possessed it.

One day, a wise traveler visited the family. Noticing their despair, he sensed the truth. He took a spade, dug under their home, and revealed the treasure. The family rejoiced, but the traveler said, “This treasure was always yours. I only showed you where to look.”

Tenzing paused, his eyes locking with Dorje’s. “Do you see, Dorje? You are like that family. The happiness, wisdom, and success you seek are already within you. The problem is not that you lack them, but that you’ve forgotten where to look.”

The Layers of Dust

“But Master,” Dorje said, “if the treasure is inside, why can’t I feel it? Why does it seem so far away?”

Tenzing picked up a mirror from the table beside him. It was old and dusty, its surface barely reflective. “What do you see?” he asked.

“Nothing, Master,” replied Dorje. “The mirror is too dirty.”

Tenzing nodded and wiped the mirror clean with his sleeve. “Now?” “I see myself.”

“This is your mind, Dorje,” Tenzing explained. “Over the years, layers of dust—fears, doubts, distractions—have gathered on the treasure within. You don’t need to add anything new; you simply need to clear away what doesn’t belong.”

Living as You Already Are

Dorje leaned forward, his curiosity piqued. “But Master, how do I do that?”

Tenzing placed his hand gently on Dorje's shoulder. "Live as though you already are what you wish to become. If you want to be wise, act with wisdom. If you want to be happy, smile and live joyfully. If you want to climb the highest mountain, believe you are already at the summit and take your first step.

"Do not look outward for what is within. The knowledge of how to reach the peak is already in you. The happiness you seek is not in possessions or achievements but in peeling away the layers that hide it. You were born happy, Dorje. You only need to remember."

The Awakening

Dorje sat in silence, the weight of Tenzing's words sinking into his heart. The wind outside carried the sound of a prayer bell, its gentle chime resonating with the truth now echoing within him.

Tenzing smiled. "Begin today, Dorje. Dust off the mirror of your mind. Live as though you already are what you wish to become. The treasure is yours—it always has been."

With tears in his eyes and newfound clarity in his heart, Dorje bowed deeply. He descended the mountain not to search for answers but to uncover the treasure that had always been his.

From that day on, Dorje lived each moment with joy and purpose, carrying Tenzing's wisdom in his heart: *The treasure is within. Clear the dust. Live as though you already are.*

I am not searching for or chasing happiness.

I am happy right now!



Awakening at the Sangam: Aarav's Path to True Potential



This story encapsulates the transformative journey of Aarav in Devprayag, highlighting the themes of self-realization and the application of timeless teachings to unlock one's true capabilities.

In the heart of Uttarakhand, nestled among the towering peaks of the Himalayas, lay the quaint village of Devprayag. This village, where the Bhagirathi and Alaknanda rivers converge to form the sacred Ganges, was steeped in mysticism and ancient wisdom. The villagers believed that the confluence, or 'Sangam,' was a symbol of the union between the human soul and divine consciousness.

Among the villagers was Aarav, a young man known for his humility and dedication. Despite his modest background, Aarav possessed an insatiable curiosity and a deep desire to understand the mysteries of life. He often spent hours meditating by the Sangam, seeking guidance and enlightenment.

One evening, as the sun dipped behind the mountains and the sky was painted with hues of orange and pink, Aarav encountered a wandering sage named Rishi Vyom. The sage, with his serene demeanor and penetrating gaze, seemed to emanate an aura of profound wisdom.

Sensing Aarav's quest for knowledge, Rishi Vyom approached him and said, "Young man, the answers you seek lie not in the external world but within you. The Creator has endowed you with immense

potential, far greater than you can fathom. Yet, like many, you remain unaware of it."

Intrigued, Aarav replied, "Revered sage, how can I realize and harness this inner potential?" The sage smiled and began to share the teachings of ancient wisdom, interwoven with the philosophies of Chanakya:

1. **Self-Belief and Confidence:** "Believe in your innate abilities. Self-doubt is a barrier to achievement, while self-belief empowers you to pursue your goals with determination."
2. **Continuous Learning:** "Every day brings an opportunity for learning. Embrace knowledge, for education is the best friend. An educated person is respected everywhere."
3. **Strategic Planning:** "Before embarking on any endeavor, reflect deeply: Why am I doing it? What might the results be? Will I succeed? Only when you find satisfactory answers should you proceed."
4. **Discipline and Perseverance:** "Cultivate self-discipline and perseverance. These virtues enable you to overcome obstacles and remain steadfast on your path."
5. **Harnessing the Subconscious Mind:** "Your mind is a powerful tool. Through positive affirmations and visualization, you can program your subconscious to align with your aspirations."
6. **Purpose and Ambition:** "Set goals that serve a greater cause. When your ambitions are driven by a higher purpose, they inspire you to transcend perceived limitations."
- 7.

Rishi Vyom continued, "The Himalayas and the Ganges embody the medley of inner calmness and outer activity, essential qualities for every spiritual aspirant. By emulating their serenity and dynamism, you can navigate life's challenges with grace."

Aarav listened intently, absorbing the sage's words. He realized that he had been limiting himself, scratching only the surface of his capabilities. With renewed determination, he decided to implement these teachings:

- **Daily Meditation and Affirmations:** Aarav began each day with meditation, reinforcing his self-belief through positive affirmations.
- **Pursuit of Knowledge:** He dedicated time to studying the scriptures and learning new skills, understanding that continuous learning was key to personal growth.
- **Strategic Goal Setting:** Before undertaking any task, Aarav reflected on his motivations and envisioned the desired outcomes, ensuring alignment with his higher purpose.
- **Maintaining Discipline:** He adhered to a disciplined routine, balancing his spiritual practices with daily responsibilities.

Over time, Aarav experienced a profound transformation. He became a source of inspiration for his fellow villagers, demonstrating that by tapping into one's inner potential and aligning efforts with divine purpose, one could achieve greatness beyond conventional expectations.

The story of Aarav serves as a testament to the boundless capabilities bestowed upon us by the Creator. By embracing self-belief, continuous learning, strategic planning, discipline, and a

higher purpose, we can transcend perceived limitations and realize our true potential.

If one aims high, focuses undistracted, and eliminates distractions, far higher results can be achieved than the potential of factual ability.



Elara's Awakening: One Woman's Fight to Illuminate the Future



"Elara's Resolve: Illuminating the Path of Progress"

This title encapsulates Elara's unwavering determination to bring enlightenment and advancement to her village, despite facing resistance and adversity.

Her story exemplifies the profound impact one individual can have in challenging the status quo and fostering progress, even when immediate recognition or reward is absent.

As Margaret Mead aptly stated, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Elara's journey reflects this sentiment, demonstrating that personal transformation and steadfast resolve can lead to significant societal change.

Her legacy serves as an inspiration for others to dare to be different, to speak up, and to take action for the betterment of humanity.

In a time when the world was shrouded in darkness and ignorance, there lived a visionary named Elara. She resided in a village where traditions were unyielding, and any deviation was met with suspicion and hostility. Elara, however, possessed a mind that danced with ideas far beyond the confines of her era.

From a young age, she questioned the status quo, yearning to bring enlightenment and progress to her people. She envisioned a society

where knowledge flowed freely, where innovation was embraced, and where individuals dared to dream beyond the horizon.

Determined to turn her vision into reality, Elara began her quest. She introduced new methods of farming to increase yields, established a small school to teach children to read and write, and crafted tools to ease daily labor. However, her efforts were met with resistance.

The village elders, steadfast in their ways, accused her of defying ancestral traditions. Neighbors whispered that she was inviting misfortune by challenging the natural order. Some even sabotaged her work, fearing the unknown changes she represented.

Despite the mounting opposition, Elara's resolve remained unshaken. She toiled from dawn till dusk, her hands blistered, and her spirit tested. She faced ridicule, isolation, and threats, yet she pressed on, fueled by the unwavering belief that her actions would pave the way for a brighter future.

Years turned into decades, and Elara's hair silvered with age. She witnessed small but significant transformations: a child she taught became a healer, using newfound knowledge to save lives; the improved harvests ended the village's cycles of famine; the tools she introduced lightened the burdens of daily toil.

Elara passed away without fanfare, her dreams only partially realized. Yet, the seeds she planted continued to grow. Generations later, the village blossomed into a hub of learning and innovation. The descendants of those who once opposed her now revered her as the pioneer who dared to defy the darkness.

Her life became a testament to the power of individual courage and conviction. Elara's legacy illuminated the truth that progress often demands the strength to stand alone, to face adversity without expectation of reward or recognition.

In every era, it is the bold actions of solitary figures like Elara that propel humanity forward. Their willingness to embrace unpopularity, to endure hardship, and to challenge the familiar for the sake of advancement, ensures that the world evolves beyond its former limitations.

Therefore, dare to be the catalyst for change. Speak out, innovate, and persevere, even when faced with resistance. Understand that the path of the trailblazer is fraught with challenges, and immediate gratitude or reward may remain elusive. Yet, the impact of your courage will ripple through time, and future generations will honor the foundation you laid.

Be that person who, like Elara, embraces the mantle of progress, knowing that while the present may not offer recognition, the future will be built upon your unwavering resolve to make the world a better place.

"Throughout every era of History, it is clear that one person can change everything"

Be that person!



From Tears to Applause: Devaki's Victory in Kalpathi



In a quiet village nestled along the banks of the Bharathapuzha river, there lived a young woman named Devaki. Her life had been shaped by trials and triumphs, much like the river that ebbed and flowed through the seasons. Years ago, Devaki had faced a series of humiliations and failures in her hometown of Kalpathi, a picturesque village in Kerala known for its ancient temples and vibrant festivals. Once, during a youth festival, she had faltered in a Bharatanatyam performance, slipping mid-step on the temple stage, earning whispers and mockery from the onlookers. The incident had haunted her, leaving a deep scar on her confidence.

Later, she attempted to establish a community library in the village, but the idea was ridiculed. Critics questioned her abilities and undermined her efforts, forcing her to abandon the project. The sense of rejection and humiliation made her leave Kalpathi, seeking solace and success in the city of Kochi.

Years passed. Devaki worked tirelessly, mastering Bharatanatyam under a renowned guru and becoming a celebrated performer. She also found success as a cultural ambassador, establishing a chain of community libraries across Kerala. However, despite her achievements, there was a lingering void—the unresolved pain from her past.

One day, she came across a note she had scribbled in her journal long ago: *Don't avoid going to places where you cried. Go back there*

and laugh! Where you failed, go back there and win. Where you slipped and fell, go back and dance. Where you were humiliated, get invited there to be honored.

Devaki realized that true healing meant returning to Kalpathi, not to confront those who had hurt her, but to reclaim her spirit. She decided to organize a grand Bharatanatyam performance at the very temple where she had once faltered. When she arrived in Kalpathi, memories resurfaced—of shame, of whispered gossip—but she held her head high. Invitations were sent out far and wide, and the entire village gathered, curious about her return.

On the day of the performance, as Devaki stepped onto the same temple stage where she had once slipped, she felt an overwhelming calm. She danced with grace and power, weaving stories of courage and redemption through her movements. The rhythm of the mridangam echoed in harmony with her heartbeats. When she completed the final pose, the audience erupted in thunderous applause. Devaki had not only reclaimed her place but had transformed her pain into a masterpiece.

Following the performance, the village elders approached her, not with mockery but with garlands and words of honor. They invited her to inaugurate the new cultural center—built on the very grounds where her library idea had been dismissed. Devaki smiled, understanding that true victory wasn't just in external success but in overcoming personal pain with grace.

Her journey was a testament to the power of returning, not for revenge but for healing. And so, the words from her journal echoed once more: *If you got hurt, make it a reason to grow and win with honor.*

Don't avoid going to places where you cried, go back there, and laugh! Where you failed, go back there and win. Where you slipped & fell down, go back and dance there! Where you were humiliated, get invited there to be honored!



Mastering Patience: Aarav's Quest for Peace in the Chaos



In the heart of Mumbai, where the city never sleeps and the honking of taxis blends with the calls of street vendors, lived a young professional named Aarav. His life was a whirlwind of boardroom meetings, traffic jams, and endless social commitments, all blending into a blur of constant activity. From the crack of dawn until late at night, he juggled professional demands and personal expectations, barely leaving space for self-reflection.

Aarav had a fiery temper, often snapping at colleagues and friends when things went wrong. He was known for his sharp mind but also his short fuse, a combination that earned him both respect and apprehension among his peers. Anger, it seemed, had a habit of barging into his life, slamming doors, and leaving behind a trail of damaged relationships, lingering regrets, and emotional scars wrapped in regret. Once, he lost a promising business deal due to a heated outburst in a critical meeting, a mistake that haunted him.

One evening, after a particularly stressful day, Aarav found himself in a heated argument with his closest friend Rhea over something trivial. Words were exchanged, voices raised, and just like that, another relationship seemed on the brink of collapse. Later that night, alone in his high-rise apartment, the city lights shimmering in the distance, Aarav sat in silence, replaying the confrontation over and over in his mind. His pulse slowed, and the weight of his words pressed heavily on his chest.

His thoughts drifted to the wise words his grandmother had once told him during his childhood: "Anger breaks the door, taking away precious things in no time. Patience waits quietly outside, never knocking, offering treasures we rarely accept." Those words echoed now with newfound clarity, as if they were meant for this very moment. He realized how often he had let anger steal his peace, while patience had been left uninvited.

The next morning, still haunted by the argument, Aarav decided to change. He began practicing mindfulness, learning to pause before reacting. He read books on emotional intelligence, attended workshops, and even started journaling his thoughts every evening. Patience, he discovered, was subtle—it never forced its way in but lingered, waiting for him to invite it. Though it felt challenging at first, with each passing day, he noticed a shift. Conversations became calmer, conflicts diffused, and slowly, his relationships started mending.

Months passed. Aarav found himself transformed in many facets. Meetings were no longer battlefields but spaces for collaboration. Friends who had kept their distance began to reconnect. One day, he received an unexpected message from Rhea, inviting him for coffee. His heart raced with both excitement and nervousness, but he knew this was a chance to make amends.

They met at a cozy café near Marine Drive. As the waves crashed gently outside, Aarav listened more than he spoke. He apologized sincerely, not just for the argument but for the patterns he had finally acknowledged and worked to change. Rhea, initially guarded, gradually softened as she saw the sincerity in his eyes. They laughed and shared memories, and before parting ways, Rhea said, "You've changed, Aarav. In the best way."

As Aarav walked along the bustling streets of Mumbai that evening, he reflected on his journey. Embracing patience hadn't just healed his personal life but had opened doors to deeper connections and a more meaningful existence amid the vibrant chaos of the city. Indeed, patience had brought precious gifts he once never thought to unwrap, proving that the greatest transformations begin from within.

Anger enters by breaking the door and takes away many precious things in no time leaving behind regrets & scars in a gift wrap. Patience waits at the door without even knocking on the door or ringing the doorbell. Wants us to take it in, when we may choose to! Comes with many precious gifts but most of the time, we simply don't even open the door.



Rising Beyond: The Mountain of Support



In the glimmering expanse of South Mumbai, where the city's pulse hums through luxury cars and the skyline boasts some of the most coveted real estate in the world, there lived a man named Raghav Malhotra. At first glance, he appeared to embody everything one would aspire to: tall, well-groomed, always impeccably dressed in tailored suits, his life a portrait of success. Yet beneath his polished exterior, a far more complex and painful journey had unfolded—one that he rarely revealed to anyone.

Raghav had grown up in a modest family in the heart of Mumbai's suburbs, far from the posh neighborhoods of Colaba and Marine Drive where he now resided. He had witnessed his parents struggle to make ends meet, yet their love for each other was the unspoken support that kept them going. But for Raghav, support had always been a fragile concept. As a young man, he faced the overwhelming weight of expectations: to succeed, to provide, and most of all, to belong. He had lived in a world where social circles were determined by wealth, influence, and power. But he had none of those things when he started his career.

In those early years, Raghav often felt like an outsider. The events and gatherings held in the luxury apartments of Colaba and Worli seemed distant, unreachable. Invitations were rare, and when they did come, they felt like a reminder of what he lacked. As he struggled to climb the corporate ladder, there were times when loneliness clawed at him, and the absence of a strong support system left him feeling vulnerable. The social games of South Mumbai's

elite, their subtle but sharp judgments, often wore him down. He found himself questioning his worth.

“I’ll never be good enough for this world,” he thought during one such evening, staring out at the city’s glowing lights from his modest high-rise apartment.

But it was in that moment, while alone in the cold silence of his apartment, that Raghav made a decision that would forever alter the course of his life. He wasn’t going to let his vulnerabilities define him. He wasn’t going to be the person who sat in the shadows, waiting for someone to offer a hand of help. Instead, he would become a person who didn’t need saving, a person who could be the pillar of strength for others.

The road ahead wasn’t easy. He worked tirelessly, taking on multiple projects at once, learning new skills, and, most importantly, shedding his insecurities. His rise through the corporate world was not fueled by an innate sense of superiority but by a deep, visceral desire to stand on his own feet. He moved to South Mumbai, renting a flat that was a far cry from the lavish homes of his peers. Yet, he didn’t feel ashamed. It was his starting point, his own personal mountain that he was determined to climb.

Years passed, and Raghav’s name became synonymous with success in the business circles of Mumbai. He earned accolades and respect, but what he cherished most was the sense of self-reliance he had cultivated. And with that strength came the realization that there were others like him—people who had once felt alone, isolated, and overlooked. He had grown to understand that vulnerability was not a weakness; it was a human experience that connected everyone, no matter their social status.

It was during one of the high-profile events at The Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, hosted by a prominent business tycoon, that Raghav’s journey came full circle. The opulent ballroom was filled

with the city's elite, their conversations laced with the sharpness of power and privilege. But Raghav wasn't here to bask in the glory of his success. He had come with a purpose.

As he entered the room, his eyes scanned the crowd, recognizing many faces. Yet, among them, there was one person who caught his attention—Kavya Deshmukh, the daughter of a well-known industrialist. She was standing alone by the corner, her expression distant, her eyes tired. Kavya, like Raghav once had, was caught in the invisible web of expectations, struggling to live up to the image her family and society demanded of her. From the outside, she seemed to have it all: beauty, wealth, a family name that commanded respect. But Raghav could see it—the loneliness in her eyes, the burden she carried, the vulnerability she tried so desperately to hide.

Without hesitation, Raghav walked over to her, offering a warm smile.

“Are you enjoying the party?” he asked casually, knowing well that it wasn't the kind of question she'd been expecting.

Kavya looked at him, startled at first before a smile tugged at her lips. “I suppose,” she replied, her voice tinged with a hint of melancholy. “Just another evening of pretenses.”

For the next hour, they talked, not about the glittering world they inhabited, but about life—real life, the kind that had nothing to do with wealth or status. They shared stories of their struggles, their fears, and the moments when they felt like they had no one to turn to. Raghav listened attentively, as he had learned to do over the years. He shared his own journey, telling Kavya how he had once felt vulnerable and out of place, how he had learned to climb his own metaphorical mountain, and how it was in helping others climb theirs that he found true purpose.

“It’s not about reaching the top of the mountain alone,” Raghav said, his voice steady. “It’s about bringing others along with you. You see, Kavya, the mountain isn’t the challenge. The challenge is making sure we don’t leave anyone behind.”

Kavya looked at him, her eyes bright with a mixture of surprise and admiration. “But what if we fall? What if we fail?”

Raghav smiled, a genuine, kind smile. “Then we get back up. Every time.”

Kavya stood in stunned silence for a moment, and then, for the first time that evening, her smile reached her eyes.

Over the next few months, Raghav and Kavya formed an unexpected bond. She confided in him, and he guided her through the maze of societal pressures. He taught her that true success wasn’t measured by material wealth or the number of influential people in one’s life but by the ability to support and uplift others. Through their conversations, Kavya slowly began to let go of her fear of failure and embrace her own power. She became involved in various charitable causes, seeking to give back to those who had, like her, felt the weight of isolation.

Raghav’s life, too, changed. As his career continued to soar, so did his ability to help others. He started a foundation that supported young professionals from underprivileged backgrounds, offering them mentorship and opportunities. He became known not just as a successful businessman, but as a mentor, a guide, a pillar of support for those who needed it most.

One evening, as Raghav sat in his office, looking out over the glittering city lights of South Mumbai, he realized something profound. The mountain he had climbed wasn’t a solitary ascent—it had been a shared journey. He had climbed, not just for himself, but to be a beacon for others, to show them that they, too, could scale their mountains. And as he watched the city below, a sense of peace washed over him. He no longer needed validation from the

world around him. He had found his purpose, not in being at the top, but in lifting others up with him.

And so, Raghav Malhotra became a support—not just for Kavya, but for countless others. The vulnerability he had once feared had become his strength, and in helping others navigate their own struggles, he had found an unshakable peace. The mountain was no longer a symbol of his struggles, but a testament to his resilience and the power of lifting others along the way.

There was a stage in life when I used to feel vulnerable for having no support. I am glad instead of scraping the bottom of the mountain in self-pitying, I climbed the mountain and became a support for many.



The Journey Beyond the Boardroom



Arvind Mehra sat in the passenger lounge of Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, waiting for his flight to Delhi. As the CEO of a successful tech company, he was accustomed to the bustle of business trips—frequent flights, endless meetings, and the constant pressure to perform. Yet, there was something about this moment that felt different. Perhaps it was the quiet hum of the airport, or the distant peaks of the Himalayas visible through the windows, but today, something felt out of place within him.

For the past few months, Arvind had been grappling with a sense of emptiness. Success had come easily for him—he had built his company from the ground up, overcoming countless obstacles. But despite his achievements, he couldn't shake the feeling that something was missing. The praise, the promotions, and the prestige felt hollow. He had climbed the corporate ladder, but with each rung, it felt like he had lost a piece of himself.

As he scrolled through his emails, a figure across the lounge caught his eye. A monk, dressed in simple saffron robes, sat alone by the window. His face was serene, eyes closed in quiet meditation, while the chaos of the airport seemed to pass him by unnoticed. Arvind found himself intrigued by the man's calm composure—something he had not felt in ages.

Unable to resist, Arvind stood up and walked over. "Excuse me," he began, his voice polite but curious. "It's rare to see someone so calm in a place like this. How do you manage it?"

The monk opened his eyes slowly, smiling in a way that radiated peace. "Ah, the world moves quickly, doesn't it? But stillness can be found in the middle of it all if you know where to look."

Arvind chuckled, sitting down across from him. "I think I need to learn that. My life's always been about moving faster—closing deals, growing the business, achieving more. It feels like there's always something else to do. But lately, I've been feeling like I'm running on empty, as if no matter how much I achieve, it never feels enough."

The monk nodded; his gaze unwavering. "The world you chase, Arvind, is vast and never-ending. It demands much of you. But in your pursuit, have you stopped to ask yourself—what is it that you truly seek?"

Arvind blinked, caught off guard by the simplicity of the question. "What do you mean? I've built my life around ambition. Success. Recognition. These are the things I've worked for."

The monk smiled gently. "And yet, here you are, feeling empty, seeking more. Perhaps, it is not more success you need, but more stillness."

Arvind frowned, unable to understand. "Stillness? What do you mean? I'm a business executive; I don't have time for stillness. My life is a constant rush."

"Ah," the monk said, nodding knowingly. "Stillness does not mean doing nothing. It means finding peace within yourself amidst the rush. It means appreciating what is already here, instead of constantly chasing what is not."

Arvind listened intently, though his mind still struggled to grasp the idea. "So, you're saying that I should stop striving for success and just be content with where I am?"

The monk shook his head slowly. "No, Arvind. What I am saying is this: success is not a destination, but a journey. When you strive only for the next achievement, the next big goal, you will always be looking ahead and never truly experiencing the present moment. The value of life, of success, lies in the quality of each moment. Not in the accolades, the titles, or the possessions, but in the person, you become along the way."

Arvind felt a stirring in his chest. This was not what he expected to hear. He had spent his life building an empire, always driven by the need to prove himself—to earn recognition from others. But here, in front of him, was a man who seemed to radiate peace, unshaken by the world's demands. What was his secret?

The monk continued, "Your worth is not determined by external validation, Arvind. No one's applause or recognition should define you. True strength comes from within. It comes from appreciating your own worth and the value of others, regardless of how they may perceive you."

Arvind shifted in his seat, feeling a mixture of confusion and awe. He had never considered the idea that he could be enough without the constant need for external validation. "But what if people don't appreciate me?" he asked, his voice tinged with doubt. "What if they don't see the value in what I do?"

The monk smiled again, his eyes twinkling with kindness. "That is not for you to control, Arvind. What others think of you is their journey, not yours. Your only responsibility is to appreciate the good in others, regardless of whether they acknowledge you or not. When you can do that, when you can rise above the need for validation, you will find peace."

As the monk's words sank in, Arvind felt a shift deep within him. He had spent so much of his life fixated on what others thought of him. He had measured his success by the applause he received, by the recognition he garnered. But now, he realized that his true success lay not in external approval, but in the inner peace he could cultivate by simply appreciating the qualities of others.

The announcement for the Delhi flight echoed through the lounge, signaling that it was time to board. Arvind stood up, his mind racing with the newfound wisdom the monk had shared with him. As he gathered his things, he turned to the monk and said, "Thank you. I think you've given me something more valuable than any business deal I've ever made."

The monk nodded; his serene expression unwavering. "The journey you're on, Arvind, is not just about what you achieve. It's about who you become along the way. Appreciate others, rise with time, and you will find the peace you seek."

As Arvind walked toward the gate, he felt a sense of calm wash over him. The turbulence of his thoughts had settled, replaced by a clarity he had not known before. He realized that the true measure of success was not in the applause or recognition of others but in his ability to appreciate those around him, to rise above the need for validation, and to find peace within himself.

The flight to Delhi was smooth, but it was the journey inside that would prove to be the most transformative. Arvind had learned a profound lesson: that true growth wasn't just about rising in age or status—it was about rising in wisdom, humility, and the ability to appreciate the beauty of the present moment.

Appreciate good qualities and merit of someone irrespective of whether you like them, and even if they hate you.

The fact that no one clapped for me, cannot stop me from clapping for others. It is important to rise not only age with time!



Warrior's Resolve: A Journey of Courage and Conviction



In the heart of Mumbai, at the towering Nariman Point, a high-profile interview was taking place. The media room was filled with cameras and journalists, their attention fixed on the man at the center of the stage. The figure before them was no ordinary person. Brigadier Vikram Deshmukh, a highly respected officer of the Indian Army, had been invited to speak at one of the nation's most prestigious programs. With a career spanning over three decades, he was a living legend in the military, admired for his bravery, leadership, and unwavering commitment to the nation.

Despite his rank, Deshmukh exuded the quiet dignity of a true warrior. His sharp features were framed by salt-and-pepper hair, and his eyes gleamed with the kind of intensity that spoke of battles fought and challenges overcome. His uniform, meticulously pressed and adorned with medals, was a testament to years of valor. But it was not the medals or the uniform that defined him—it was the stories he carried with him, stories of sacrifice, honor, and a deep sense of duty.

As the interview began, Deshmukh was asked a question that would resonate with millions: "Brigadier Deshmukh, what does leadership mean to you? How do you define true courage?"

The question hung in the air, and for a moment, the man who had commanded men through some of the most intense operations in modern warfare closed his eyes. His thoughts drifted, not to the

battlefields of distant lands, but to the narrow lanes and rugged mountains of Maharashtra, where two legendary figures—Shivaji Maharaj and Bajirao Peshwa—had shaped his very understanding of leadership and courage.

Deshmukh straightened up; the fire of his ancestors reflected in his voice. "True leadership," he began, "isn't defined by the number of medals you collect or the titles you wear. It is not about how loud you shout or how forcefully you command. Leadership is about resilience—the ability to rise when no one believes in you. It's about carrying the weight of your people, your men, even when they are unable to carry themselves. It's about showing strength, not in the force of your arms, but in the steadfastness of your spirit."

He paused for a moment, his gaze growing distant, as if seeing the very soul of Maharashtra's history come alive before him. "For years, no one counted me. Some laughed, several discarded me, many bullied me," he continued, his tone reflecting the bitter truth of a long journey. "I was considered unworthy of leading, unfit to command. But like the warriors of our land—like Shivaji Maharaj, who rose from humble beginnings to build an empire—like Bajirao Peshwa, who led his troops to victory with a heart full of conviction—I learned that the strength of a true warrior lies not in how he is seen by others, but in the silent, relentless fight within."

The journalists sat in stunned silence. Brigadier Deshmukh was not just recounting history—he was embodying it. He had lived the struggles, the pain of being underestimated, the weight of rejection, and the hunger to prove his worth. But what made his story different was how he had transformed that pain into power.

His mind flashed back to his early days in the army when he was just another officer trying to make his mark. The scorn, the laughter, and the doubts of those around him had left deep scars. There were

times when he was questioned about his decisions, and times when he was criticized for taking a stand that others didn't have the courage to take. In those moments, he felt the sting of isolation, of being the odd one out, the one who was overlooked.

But somewhere along the way, Deshmukh realized that the struggle itself was shaping him into something more than just an officer. It was shaping him into a leader—a true warrior. And just like the great kings of Maharashtra, he began to understand the true meaning of courage: "Courage isn't about running into the fray with your sword raised high. Courage is about standing firm in the face of adversity when everyone else tells you to step back. It's about holding your ground when all forces are pushing against you. It's about rising each time you are knocked down."

His reflection drew parallels with the legends of Shivaji Maharaj, the fearless king who had stood against the mighty Mughal empire and built his kingdom, not with sheer numbers, but with an unshakable resolve and a strategic mind. Shivaji Maharaj, despite the overwhelming odds, had always fought with his mind and his heart, showing that resilience was the key to victory. He had faced countless betrayals, challenges, and doubts, but he never lost sight of his vision for Swarajya—self-rule.

Bajirao Peshwa, too, had faced his own set of adversities. He had led his Maratha forces with unmatched skill, never fearing to take risks, and always believing in his soldiers. His iconic horse, Nagswar, and his never-give-up attitude symbolized the unbreakable spirit of the Maratha empire. It was this spirit that Deshmukh carried within him, the knowledge that greatness was not achieved by avoiding pain, but by conquering it.

Deshmukh continued, his voice steady and filled with a quiet intensity. "I don't need a jacket to shield me," he said, pausing for effect. "I have made my heart bulletproof. Silent, relentless. The

world might mock you, the people may doubt you, but what matters is the strength you build within. It's not the uniform or the accolades—it's the character. It's about being tested, standing tall, and refusing to bend, no matter how hard the storm rages."

His words echoed across the room, not just to the journalists, but to anyone who had ever struggled, been rejected, or doubted their worth. Arvind Deshmukh was not just a military leader; he was a modern embodiment of the Maratha warrior spirit, a spirit forged in the crucible of adversity.

"I've spent years in the army, fighting wars, leading troops, making difficult decisions. But one thing I've learned above all else," Deshmukh said, leaning forward with quiet confidence, "is that victory is not measured by the battles you win. It is measured by the strength of the heart you cultivate. Like the warriors of Maharashtra's past, we are all faced with battles—both external and internal. The true warrior is not the one who wins every battle, but the one who keeps fighting, keeps rising, and keeps believing in the cause."

The room was silent. His words had struck a chord deep within everyone present. It wasn't just a lesson in leadership or courage—it was a lesson in resilience, in the refusal to be defined by anyone else's expectations or limitations.

Brigadier Deshmukh's journey was far from over, but as he stood before the world, sharing his story, he knew that his heart had become unbreakable. Just as Shivaji had ridden through the jungles with his small band of warriors to challenge mighty empires, and just as Bajirao had led his troops through countless battles, Deshmukh had learned to fight not just for victory, but for the enduring spirit of resilience that defined the warriors of Maharashtra.

His story was not one of fame but of quiet strength. It was not a story of accolades, but of never giving up. As the interview came to

a close, Deshmukh left the room with a final thought that would resonate in the hearts of everyone who had heard him speak.

"True power," he said, "comes not from what you achieve, but from what you endure, and how you rise. We may fall, but we never stay down. That is the heart of a warrior."

The true warrior is not the one who wins every battle, but the one who keeps fighting, keeps rising, and keeps believing in the cause. And, in a jungle if you want mere meals, you may keep hunting the rabbits but if you want to be the king of the jungle then you have to defeat the Lion with a crown, in a straight battle. Settle for that, what you believe you are cut out for! The cause that you stand for massively matters - that precisely differentiates a soldier from a terrorist



The Negotiator's Stand

Buying Peace V/s a Non-Negotiable Stance



The city of Mumbai, a sprawling metropolis where the world's fast-paced economy hummed day and night, had the privilege of hosting one of the most prestigious global leadership workshops. Among the invitees was a man whose reputation in the world of negotiation had earned him respect across continents—a negotiator of unparalleled skill who had navigated through some of the most harrowing situations in history. His name was Arjun Deshmukh, a man whose calm demeanor and sharp mind had seen him through tense negotiations, from hijacked planes to delicate international trade agreements.

On the day of the workshop, the grand hall at the Ritz-Carlton in South Mumbai was filled with dignitaries, business leaders, and diplomats, all eager to hear the man who had brokered peace during crises and steered countries through difficult negotiations. Arjun was no ordinary negotiator. His career was a blend of strategy, psychology, and a deep understanding of human emotions. His journey was not one that anyone could have imagined when he started out as a simple defense analyst with the Indian Air Force, navigating complex geopolitical dynamics.

As the attendees settled into their seats, Arjun stood at the podium, his posture calm and confident, yet there was a quiet intensity in his eyes. He had been through countless high-stakes situations, but today, as he addressed an audience that hung on every word, he knew that this moment was different. This was not about the deals

he had struck or the crises he had defused. This was about something deeper—the essence of negotiation, the heart of diplomacy, and the unspoken cost of peace.

A Sharp Mind and a Peaceful Heart

Arjun began with a story from one of the most critical moments of his career. It was a hijacking situation on a commercial plane flying from Mumbai to Dubai. The plane had been taken over by armed terrorists who threatened to kill all passengers unless their demands were met. The Indian government had called in Arjun, who had a reputation for de-escalating high-pressure situations.

For 72 hours, Arjun was in constant communication with the hijackers, negotiating the release of hostages while maintaining the fragile balance between taking decisive action and avoiding unnecessary bloodshed. Arjun was well aware of the stakes. A wrong move could lead to the loss of hundreds of innocent lives. But what struck him during those tense hours was the sheer unpredictability of human nature. The hijackers, driven by anger and frustration, were not mere criminals—they were human beings, flawed and torn by their own struggles. It was this understanding that allowed Arjun to connect with them on a deeper level, making them see reason when no one else could.

“I always believed that negotiation isn’t just about strategy,” Arjun explained to the room full of leaders. “It’s about understanding the other side’s pain, their motivations, and finding a way to address them without losing your own soul in the process. In that moment, I had to be calm, but also firm. I had to show them that I was willing to listen, but I was also willing to walk away if their demands were unreasonable.”

The audience listened intently as Arjun spoke about the intricacies of crisis management. But what struck them the most was his ability

to blend logic with compassion—a rare trait in a field often dominated by hard-nosed decision-making and cutthroat competition. Arjun continued, explaining that his ability to negotiate in life-or-death situations stemmed not only from his sharp mind but also from his underlying belief in peace.

“I am, by nature, a peace lover. I have always chosen peace, but there are moments when peace cannot be achieved without a price. I have had to stand tall, even when the price was steep, because there are things—there are people—that I stand for,” he said, his voice steady but full of emotion.

The Price of Peace

Arjun paused for a moment, allowing the weight of his words to settle in. The audience could feel the gravity of what he was saying. He wasn't just talking about negotiations in the conventional sense—he was talking about the negotiations of life.

He continued, recalling an international trade negotiation between two countries that had lasted months. The stakes were high—millions of dollars were on the line, and both sides were unwilling to budge. Arjun was tasked with finding a middle ground, a solution that would benefit both nations. But as the talks progressed, he realized something that no one else seemed to see: the negotiation was no longer about the deal itself. It had become a battle of egos. Both countries were so entrenched in their positions that the future of the deal was in jeopardy.

“It wasn't just about the money,” Arjun reflected. “It was about pride, history, and a need to prove dominance. I knew then that the only way to move forward was to make both sides feel that they were winning, even if it meant compromising on what I initially thought was non-negotiable.”

Arjun's words carried a powerful lesson for the audience: there were times when one had to step back, make peace with one's own ego, and pay a price to reach an agreement. He wasn't advocating weakness—he was advocating wisdom. Sometimes, you have to give up a little to gain much more. But there were also moments, as he would later explain when the stakes were too high for compromise.

“There are times when peace is non-negotiable,” Arjun stated firmly. “When the stakes are so high that walking away is not an option. When the safety, well-being, or dignity of others is at risk, then there is no compromise. In those moments, you have to be willing to put everything on the line, even your own life.”

The Non-Negotiable Stakes

Arjun leaned forward, his voice lowering as he shared one final story—a story that had changed his perspective on negotiation forever. It was a time when he had to make a decision that would haunt him for the rest of his life, but one that he knew, deep down, was necessary.

It was during a peacekeeping mission in a war-torn region where innocent lives were being lost due to the ongoing conflict. A group of rebels, holding hostages, had made a demand that Arjun could not accept. They wanted recognition for their cause, a cause that was unjust and would only lead to more bloodshed. Arjun knew that negotiating with the rebels would mean legitimizing violence, something he could not and would not do.

“The world told me to step back,” Arjun said, his eyes locked with the audiences. “They said that the price of peace was too high. That negotiating with terrorists was a way to bring peace. But peace without justice is not peace. And so, I made a choice. I stood my ground, even when it meant that lives were at risk. Sometimes, you

have to be willing to face the consequences of your actions, knowing that the outcome may not always be in your favor.”

He paused, allowing the silence to fill the room. “In the end, we did not negotiate with the rebels. We brought in the forces to handle the situation, and many lives were lost in the process. But the message was clear: peace cannot come at the cost of justice. Sometimes, you have to pay the price for what you believe in, no matter what.”

The room was silent. Arjun had shared a side of his work that few had ever understood. He wasn’t just a negotiator of trade agreements or political alliances. He was a man who believed in the sanctity of peace, but he also understood that peace had its limits. When the stakes were too high, he was willing to make the hard choices—to step up, to stand tall, and to take the consequences of his actions without hesitation.

The Final Lesson

As Arjun concluded his speech, he looked out at the audience, his gaze sweeping across the room. The workshop had been a platform for many speakers, but today, something had shifted. Arjun had not just shared his expertise in negotiation—he had shared his soul. He had shown them that negotiation was not just a set of techniques or strategies; it was about understanding human nature, knowing when to step back, and, at times, being willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for what one believed in.

“I stand for peace, but I also stand for what is right,” Arjun concluded, his voice strong. “There are things in life that cannot be negotiated. When those things are threatened, you must stand tall, no matter the cost. And that,” he said with a firm nod, “is the truest form of negotiation.”

As the applause erupted, Arjun stood quietly, knowing that the real battle had not been fought in the conference room but in the hearts of those who had listened. For in the end, the true negotiator was not the one who struck the best deal but the one who knew when to walk away—and when to put everything on the line for something non-negotiable.

*The otherwise "A Peace Lover", "A Buddha" as I choose to be. But
- There are things and people I stand for. There, I stand tall,
and big between them and offensive design or not aimed at these -
I do not care about the price to be paid or outcome to be faced in
those head-on I take!*



The Life in Classroom and Classroom of Life: Where Tests Shape Us



It was a cool winter morning when a group of elderly friends, ex-schoolmates from the prestigious Vidya Bhavan School in Pune, decided to reunite after decades. Life had taken them in different directions—some had become successful entrepreneurs, others devoted teachers, a few were retired, while some had faced their share of struggles. Yet, all felt an unexplainable pull towards the school where their journeys began.

The idea was simple yet profound: they would gather in their old classroom, the very place where they had once dreamt of conquering the world. Nostalgia ran deep as they walked through the school gate, the smell of chalk dust lingering faintly in the air. Time had painted the walls with a different hue, but the echoes of their younger selves seemed to linger.

As they settled into the wooden desks, the same ones where they had once etched their initials, conversations flowed easily. Laughter mixed with the bittersweet realization of how much life had changed since those innocent days. Memories were unearthed—pranks played on teachers, sports victories, the heartaches of teenage crushes, and the shared dreams of making a difference.

It was Anil who suggested inviting their old history teacher, Mr. Iyer, who had been a guiding light during their formative years. Mr. Iyer, now frail but mentally sharp, was one of the few remaining

teachers from their time. The group had managed to trace him and invited him to this special reunion.

When Mr. Iyer entered the classroom, silence fell. Time had taken its toll, yet his presence commanded the same respect. Anil stood up and addressed the group, his voice trembling slightly with emotion.

"Friends, today, as we gather in this sacred space where we learned the first lessons of life, I am reminded of something profound. In school, we were taught first—taught with patience, care, and endless opportunities to learn. Only after that came the tests. But life... life has a different design. It tests you first, sometimes brutally, and only after the test does the learning emerge—often leaving us wounded yet wiser."

The room nodded in agreement, the truth of those words resonating deeply with each of them.

Mr. Iyer, leaning gently on his cane, stepped forward. "Ah, my dear students," he began, his voice gentle but steady. "Indeed, life is a far greater teacher than any of us could ever be. But what you must realize is that both the classroom and life itself aim for the same thing—to prepare you for growth, to help you understand who you truly are."

He paused, his eyes scanning the room filled with his former students, now with graying hair and weathered faces. "Each of you has faced trials far beyond the scope of textbooks. Some of you have faced losses—of loved ones, of dreams, of health. Some have faced failure, rejection, and moments of deep self-doubt. And yet, here you are. Why? Because every test you've faced has revealed a deeper strength within you."

The room grew quiet, the weight of his words pressing gently on their hearts.

"Remember," Mr. Iyer continued, "In school, the exam was simply a measure to see if you could apply the lessons taught. But in life, the tests are often not about right or wrong answers. They are about discovering your values, your courage, your ability to rise after falling. Life tests you not to break you but to build you."

Anil spoke up, his voice reflective. "Sir, I remember how you once said, 'History repeats itself if lessons are not learned.' I never understood it back then, but now I see how true it is. Many of us have faced the same mistakes repeatedly, not because life is cruel but because we missed the learning the first time."

Mr. Iyer nodded gently. "Yes, my dear. Life's tests repeat until the lesson is learned. And yet, there is a beauty in that cycle. Every test, every challenge you face, brings you closer to understanding yourself—your purpose, your strengths, and, most importantly, your compassion for others."

The conversation turned introspective. One by one, the classmates shared their stories. Rajesh spoke about losing his business and how the experience taught him resilience. Priya shared her journey of battling illness and how it shaped her to become a counselor for cancer patients. Vikram reflected on the years of self-doubt that had held him back from pursuing his artistic dreams.

With each story, a pattern emerged—pain, struggle, learning, and eventual growth. It became clear that life was not about the avoidance of hardship but about finding meaning in those hardships.

As the gathering drew to a close, Mr. Iyer shared a final message. "My dear students, as you leave this classroom today, remember this: Life will continue to test you. But never mistake those tests as punishments. They are opportunities for you to grow, to rise, to

serve, and to love more deeply. Just as a diamond is shaped under pressure, your finest self emerges not in comfort but in challenge."

The classmates stood in respectful silence, absorbing the wisdom that years had only deepened. And as they bid farewell to their beloved school once again, they left not just with memories but with a profound realization—

Life tests you not to break you but to reveal your true strength.

And perhaps, that was the greatest lesson of all.

It is often said, that life is a classroom, life is a teacher. I feel, maybe it is! But with a fundamental difference! Here, the Test comes prior and later the lesson & learnings, as an outcome.



The Fertile Soil of Joy



Ravi sat on the edge of a crumbling stone bench, gazing blankly at the narrow, dusty lane of Ranchi. His mind was weighed down with a thousand burdens. Work pressures, family conflicts, financial strains—all seemed to conspire against his happiness. It felt like every time he sought peace, life responded with more chaos.

The sun had just begun to set, casting a golden hue on the humble surroundings. Somewhere close by, the chatter of children echoed, piercing through his clouded thoughts. When he looked up, he noticed a small group of kids playing with a worn-out tyre, rolling it down the slope and cheering with joy as it tumbled along.

The children, barefoot and wearing tattered clothes, seemed oblivious to the struggles of the world. They had no fancy toys, no modern gadgets, just an old discarded tyre. Yet their laughter was pure, infectious, and full of life.

Ravi watched closely, curious. The children had transformed the old tyre into a source of endless amusement. One of them balanced it on his head, another tried to roll it while balancing a small stick inside the hollow. When the tyre wobbled and fell, they burst into laughter rather than disappointment.

Suddenly, an epiphany struck him—joy, like a crop, grows best in fertile soil. And the mind is that soil. If the soil is cluttered with negativity, stress, and unresolved conflicts, how could joy take root? But if cleared, even the smallest moments could blossom into happiness.

He thought back to his own childhood in a small Jharkhand village. His father was a humble schoolteacher who had taught him simplicity. Life was modest, yet filled with warmth. A rainy day meant running barefoot in the fields; a stolen mango from the neighbor's tree felt like a victory. Joy was abundant back then because his mind was uncluttered.

Somewhere along the journey, as responsibilities piled up, he had allowed his mental soil to harden, to become infertile. Problems had consumed his thoughts so completely that even the most beautiful moments—his daughter's laughter, his wife's gentle care—were overshadowed.

As Ravi sat reflecting, the kids continued their game. Suddenly, the tyre bounced into a puddle, splashing mud all over the smallest child. For a moment, there was silence. Ravi anticipated tears or anger. But instead, the group erupted in louder laughter, pointing at the mud-streaked boy who was now dancing playfully.

Ravi smiled. Here was his lesson, playing out before his eyes—problems were like that muddy splash. It wasn't the splash itself but how you responded to it that determined joy.

That night, Ravi went home with a lighter heart. The lesson stayed with him. Over the next few weeks, he began tending to his "mental soil." Each morning, he consciously listed three things he was grateful for. He made time to reconnect with his wife and play with his daughter. When work challenges arose, he addressed them but refused to let them overshadow the joys that still existed.

Slowly, the weight lifted. Not because life became easier but because his mind became more receptive to happiness. And like a seed planted in fertile ground, joy began to grow again in his life.

Joy is a crop and one that has a mind like a fertile soil ploughed and ready to receive, and germinate a seed can grow and experience it in abundance, mostly independently and irrespective of the outside parameters.



The Bamboo Raft – Simplicity Over Strategy: A Leadership Lesson from the Heart



A group of top executives from various countries, representing a leading multinational company, gathered at a serene leadership retreat in Kaziranga, Assam. The workshop was set in a peaceful eco-resort surrounded by lush greenery and the distant calls of wild birds, creating an atmosphere conducive to reflection and learning.

Among the many sessions, the one that stood out was a masterclass on 'Problem Solving,' led by a renowned leadership coach, Mr. Pranab Lahiri. Dressed in a simple khadi kurta, he exuded an aura of wisdom that instantly commanded attention.

As the session began, he wrote on the whiteboard:

“You can either simplify what’s complex or complicate what’s simple.”

The executives exchanged curious glances as he continued, “Problem-solving isn’t about rocket science. Often, it requires nothing more than fundamental commonsense, used with the right perspective. Yet, in the modern world, commonsense has become remarkably uncommon, especially among the highly educated.”

The room fell silent. Many of the attendees were seasoned leaders with years of experience in global markets, yet his words struck a chord.

Mr. Lahiri continued, “Let me share a story. Years ago, in a remote village near Tezpur, a bridge collapsed during the monsoon floods. The engineers kept debating complex solutions—importing new machinery, redesigning structures—but the problem was simple: the community needed a safe way to cross the river until the bridge was rebuilt.”

“The solution came not from the experts but from a local fisherman who suggested using the traditional bamboo raft system. It was inexpensive, functional, and solved the immediate problem. Yet, it took an outsider's perspective to see it.”

He paused, letting the message sink in. “The key is understanding human needs and behaviors. Most problems involve people at their core—emotions, desires, fears. Solving them requires sensitivity, not complexity.”

The workshop continued with an activity. Each executive was given a scenario involving a failing joint venture between their company and a local Assamese cooperative. The executives split into groups and began brainstorming solutions. Some focused on drafting intricate restructuring plans involving complex legal adjustments, while others proposed cost-cutting measures that lacked empathy.

Mr. Lahiri observed quietly before calling for a break. As the teams gathered back, he shared another story.

“During a trade negotiation between two neighboring states, the talks had stalled for months. One side insisted on maintaining exclusive trade routes, while the other demanded open access. Tensions escalated. The mediator, instead of focusing on the legal aspects, asked both sides a simple question: ‘What do your people need most?’”

“They both answered—food security and employment. The solution wasn’t in complex trade clauses but in a joint project to

build agricultural infrastructure, creating jobs while ensuring mutual food stability. The problem was emotional, not just economic.”

The executives were visibly impacted. They returned to their group task with a different mindset. Instead of focusing on policies and processes alone, they explored the human factors—trust issues, miscommunication, and the cooperative members’ fears of losing their identity in a corporate takeover.

By the end of the session, they had crafted a solution balancing structure with empathy: a mentorship program where executives worked alongside the cooperative members, sharing skills while respecting local practices.

Mr. Lahiri concluded, “In leadership, be the one who simplifies, not complicates. Don’t fall into the low-grade temptation of worsening a problem just to appear as the hero who solves it. Use common sense, keep empathy at the core, and remember—most problems are simpler than they seem when you focus on people.”

The message lingered long after the workshop ended, leaving a profound impact on the executives as they returned to their global roles, carrying a newfound perspective on leadership and problem-solving.

Not an exhibit of complex problem-solving skills, sometimes just a commonsense, or ability to simplify or ability to understand involved human mind matters.



The Modern Granny: Adapting with Wisdom



In a quiet village nestled by the banks of the Brahmaputra River in Assam, a warm summer breeze carried the scent of blooming jasmine. The old wooden house, with its wide veranda and creaking floorboards, echoed with laughter as three children ran around, playing a game of hide and seek. Their grandmother, lovingly called 'Nani Ma,' watched them from her wicker chair, a cup of chai resting beside her.

The children, Aarav, Meera, and Ishan, were visiting for their school vacation. Nani Ma, nearly 80 years old, had lived a life far removed from the digital age the children knew so well. Yet, despite her age, she was known among the villagers as the 'Modern Granny'—always adapting, learning, and staying connected with the changing world.

One evening, as the golden hues of sunset painted the sky, Nani Ma called the children to sit with her. She had a way of weaving wisdom into stories, and the children knew something special was coming.

“My dear ones,” she began, her voice calm yet strong, “Do you know why I keep learning about all these gadgets and apps you show me? Why I’m on this phone you gifted me, learning to send messages and watch videos?”

The children shook their heads, curious.

Nani Ma smiled. “When I was your age, life was simpler. We didn’t have phones, computers, or social media. I grew up in a world where letters were written with ink, and news arrived days late by the postman. But life, my dear ones, never stays the same. The world keeps changing, faster than you can imagine.”

She looked out towards the river, her eyes reflecting decades of experiences. “There was a time when I thought I could stay the way I was—comfortable with the old ways. But I realized something important: You don’t need to walk backward to fall behind. Staying still is enough. If you’re not moving forward with the changing world, you’re falling behind.”

Aarav, the eldest, asked, “But Nani Ma, you’re so wise. Why would you need to change?”

She nodded thoughtfully. “Wisdom isn’t about staying rooted in the past. It’s about knowing when to adapt and grow. Let me share a story with you.”

She began recounting a time from her youth. “When I was a young woman, our village depended on the river for everything—fishing, washing, even drinking water. One year, the floods came. Many said we had always faced floods and would manage as before. But this time, it was worse. The river changed course. Fields were ruined; homes were submerged. Some elders resisted change, saying, ‘This is how it has always been.’”

She paused, letting the words sink in. “But a few brave villagers realized the old ways wouldn’t work. They learned new farming techniques, built stronger embankments, and worked with experts from Guwahati to create a water management system. Those who adapted not only survived—they thrived. The ones who resisted change struggled the most.”

The children listened intently. Nani Ma continued, “The world is moving faster than ever now. You see, my dears, when I was young, change happened over decades. Now, it happens in months, even days. If you do not keep learning, if you stop understanding the world around you, you risk becoming irrelevant—just like those who resisted during the floods.”

Meera asked softly, “But Nani Ma, isn’t it hard to keep changing all the time?”

Nani Ma smiled, patting her hand. “Yes, beta. It can be hard. But do you know what makes it easier? Curiosity and courage. Curiosity helps you stay interested in the world. Courage helps you step outside your comfort zone. I didn’t grow up with smartphones or online banking, yet today I use them. Not because they’re easy, but because I want to stay connected to you, to understand the world you live in.”

She leaned closer, her voice softer yet powerful. “Remember this—if you can stay a step ahead of change, life will be easier. If you can’t, at least keep pace with it. Never let the world leave you behind because you were too afraid or too stubborn to adapt.”

The children nodded, absorbing her words. But Nani Ma wasn’t done yet.

“However,” she added, her voice firm, “Adapting doesn’t mean losing yourself. Stay grounded in your values. Learn, and grow, but never forget kindness, honesty, and empathy. Technology will change, but the human heart will remain the same. Keep your compassion alive, no matter how advanced the world becomes.”

The next morning, inspired by their grandmother’s words, the children helped her set up her first video call with a cousin who lived abroad. As the call connected and laughter filled the air, it was clear that Nani Ma’s wisdom had not only inspired the children but had

also proven that staying relevant wasn't just about technology—it was about embracing growth with love, courage, and wisdom.

And so, her legacy continued—not just as a modern granny but as a timeless teacher of life's most important lessons.

While taking steps, keeping the time sense is so vital. if one can stay ahead of time, it's great but at the least ensuring to be with it is so crucial!



Like Grass in the Storm: A Journey of Survival and Growth



The moonlight spilled gently through the window, casting a soft glow over the room. It was the night before Sita's departure, and the house was filled with a mix of emotions—excitement, anticipation, and a deep sense of unease. Her mother was busy packing the last of the belongings, while her father sat in the quiet corner, his eyes distant, reflecting on the bittersweet moment.

The small village had always been home—her cradle, her foundation. But the time had come to leave for the city, a place far from the simplicity of her life here. It was where the world beyond her village would open up to her, with education, opportunities, and experiences waiting. She would be alone there. She had no idea how she would face the many challenges and the overwhelming sense of being far from the people who had shaped her world.

Her father, a man of few words but deep wisdom, had been quiet all evening. He had watched her grow, always providing guidance without saying much. Tonight, however, he could feel the weight of the moment. Sita, the daughter he had held close all these years, was about to embark on a journey into the unknown. The thought of her being alone in the bustling city, without the shelter of home, troubled him more than he let on.

As Sita walked over to her father, her heart was heavy with the realization that this was the last time she would sleep under her childhood roof for a long while. She sat beside him, her gaze steady yet filled with a quiet uncertainty.

He looked at her with soft eyes, his voice carrying the warmth of years of experience. “Sita,” he said, his voice low but clear. “Tomorrow, you will step into a world unlike the one you’ve known here. It will be full of new faces, unfamiliar challenges, and opportunities that will test you in ways you can’t yet imagine.”

Her father paused, as if choosing his words carefully, aware of the weight they would carry. “We won’t be there with you every moment, but remember this: No matter how far you go, we will always be just a shout away. The love and care we have for you will always be with you, even if you can’t see us.”

Sita nodded, trying to hold back the tears that welled up in her eyes. She knew that their words were meant to be a balm for the growing ache in her heart. But it was his next words, his final advice, that would stay with her forever.

Her father took a deep breath and leaned slightly toward her, as if sharing a secret only the wise could understand. “My dear,” he began, “life will throw many storms your way—times when you’ll feel alone, overwhelmed, and unsure of where to turn. There will be moments when the weight of responsibility will press on you, when the winds of doubt will blow strong. In those moments, remember this: The key to survival, in times of crisis, lies in flexibility.”

Sita looked at him, her brow furrowed in curiosity.

He continued, his voice steady but filled with profound wisdom. “Strength alone is not always enough. Look at the mighty trees around us—strong, rooted, and unwavering. But when the storm comes, when the winds howl and the rains fall in torrents, their strength becomes their downfall. The branches break, the roots pull up, and the trees are felled. But the grass, Sita, the grass is different. It bends in the wind. It adapts. It yields, but it does not break. It survives. And when the storm passes, it stands tall again.”

Sita felt a shiver run down her spine. The image of the unyielding tree and the humble grass was vivid in her mind.

“Strength is important,” her father continued. “But flexibility—adaptability in the face of adversity—is what will see you through. If you can bend, if you can adjust to the changes life throws at you, you will always find a way to survive. And not just survive, Sita, but grow. Like the grass after a storm, you will stand taller and stronger than before.”

Sita’s eyes brimmed with tears now, but she did not speak. She could feel the weight of his words seeping deep into her soul.

Her father placed a hand on her shoulder, a silent promise of support. “You are ready for this, my daughter. You have the strength to face whatever comes your way. But never forget the power of flexibility. Life will ask much of you, and there will be times when you must bend to move forward. But always remember: Like grass in the storm, you will survive. And through that survival, you will thrive.”

With that, he pulled her close for a long, warm embrace. The night stretched on, the quiet sound of the wind outside blending with the soft rhythm of their hearts. Tomorrow, Sita would leave, but the strength of her father’s words would stay with her always—guiding

her, grounding her, reminding her that she carried a piece of home with her wherever she went.

If one achieves and retains flexibility too, in case of storms and floods survival like grass blades is possible where the strength of a mammoth tree may, in fact, become a vulnerability.



Cooking Up Success: Rice, Spice, and Relentless Fire



The hall was packed with eager faces, each student radiating the excitement and nerves of a fresh graduate, ready to step into the world. The air was thick with anticipation as the moment arrived for the keynote speaker to take the stage. It was a name everyone in the auditorium knew, though few knew the true depth of his story—the actor who had climbed from the very bottom, with no silver spoon, no guarantees, and no easy path. He was a living testament to the idea that with grit, passion, and an unyielding commitment to one's craft, anything was possible.

As the applause echoed, the actor stood at the podium, gazing out over the sea of hopeful faces. His eyes softened as he took in the sight of these young people, standing at the precipice of their futures. He had been in their shoes once, filled with dreams and doubts, wondering if it was all worth the struggle. And now, after years of hard work, sacrifice, and setbacks, he had become the person who could give them hope, and perhaps a glimpse of the power of persistence.

He cleared his throat, and the room fell into a hushed silence.

"Good evening, everyone. It's an honor to stand here in front of all of you today. I see so many bright, eager faces—each of you is about to embark on a journey that will challenge, change, and shape you in ways you can't yet imagine. But before you step out there and begin chasing your dreams, let me share a story with you."

He paused, a smile tugging at the corner of his mouth, as if reminiscing about his own journey.

"You know, when I started out, I wasn't handed anything. I didn't come from a rich family, I didn't have connections, and I certainly didn't have any shortcuts. I was just another face in a crowd, trying to make my mark. I struggled, I failed, and I fell time and time again. But I never gave up. I couldn't. Because deep down, I knew something—that success wasn't about having it easy. It was about having the guts to keep going, no matter how tough it got."

He looked out at the students, their eyes wide, hanging on his every word.

"Now, I'm not here to tell you that hard work alone will guarantee success. There's something else involved, something we often overlook—luck. But let me make this clear: Luck is not some random stroke of chance. Luck, in my experience, is more like the spice in a good meal. It's what adds that special kick, that touch of magic that turns ordinary into extraordinary. But you can't rely on it alone. No, luck is just the spice, the little sprinkle that makes the dish memorable. The real substance, the real magic comes from the rice and the water—the effort, the commitment, the preparation."

The room was so quiet, you could hear a pin drop. The actor's words felt like a powerful force in the air.

"Imagine, if you will, the process of making a mouthwatering pulao. You start with rice. It's the base, the foundation of the dish. But just rice? It won't get you far. You need water. That's your effort. The consistency, the effort you put in day after day. It's what makes the rice cook, what gives it life. And then comes the spice—the luck that will season your success, that will bring everything together in the most beautiful way. But there's one more ingredient. You need the fire. You need the heat to cook the rice, to blend it with the

spices and the water. That fire, my friends, comes from the fire in your belly—the passion, the hunger, the drive to make it happen."

The actor's voice had grown more intense, as if the very words were igniting something within him. The students could feel it too, the surge of energy that pulsed through the room.

"I'll tell you this," he said, his eyes now locked on the students in front of him, "Success is not just a matter of talent or luck. It's about igniting that fire in your belly. It's about fueling that passion, committing to your dreams, and putting in the work. You've all got the rice, the water, the spice, and the fire inside of you. But the question is—will you choose to stoke it? Will you take that fire and turn it into something unstoppable?"

He paused for a moment, letting the weight of his words settle in the room.

"All of you are ready. You're prepared. You've been given the tools to make your own destiny. But now, it's up to you. Take that fire and go cook up something incredible. Your success will not be defined by how lucky you are, but by how hard you work, how deep you dig, and how relentlessly you chase your dreams."

The students sat there in stunned silence, their hearts racing. The actor's words had ignited something within them, a fire that had been waiting to be unleashed.

"I'll leave you with this," the actor concluded, his voice softening but still powerful. "Don't wait for the world to give you a chance. Create your own. And when you look back at what you've achieved, you'll know that it wasn't just the spice of luck that got you there—it was your preparation, your effort, and your fire that made all the difference."

With that, he stepped away from the podium, the applause erupting like thunder. But it wasn't the applause that mattered—it was the fire that had been lit in each of those students' hearts. The fire to succeed. The fire to create. The fire burns brightly in the world, just like the actor had done.

And with that, they were ready to begin their own journeys, knowing that success was not just about the destination—it was about everything they did to get there. The effort, the preparation, and the fire within.

*A push of luck is indeed required for the effort to yield success.
But the proportion and the order of sequence are like putting rice &
spice to make a mouthwatering pulao.*



Being a Shark: A Story of Respect and Wisdom



The sun was beginning to set, casting a golden hue over the city as it sank behind the towering buildings. The soft hum of traffic below was barely audible in the quiet of the room where Arvind sat, lost in his thoughts. He had been away from this place for over a decade, ever since he made a name for himself as one of the country's top athletes. Now, after years of fame, recognition, and countless victories, he was back at his childhood friend's house, seeking solace, understanding, and advice.

Arvind, the successful sportsman, had come a long way from the small village he had grown up in. His journey had been nothing short of extraordinary. From the dusty playgrounds of his school to the grand stadiums of the world, he had proven himself time and time again. He had been the underdog, the one everyone doubted, and now he was the champion, the one everyone revered. Yet, despite all his success, something had started to gnaw at him.

Recently, his words—once revered and inspirational—had started to stir controversy. As his popularity grew, so did his opinions, and they began to take a critical turn. Arvind, in his quest to assert his dominance in his sport, had started making harsh comments about other athletes, about sports that weren't his own. His critiques were blunt, often dismissive, and more than once, they had ruffled feathers in the sports community.

Sitting in the familiar room, surrounded by relics of their childhood—trophies, old school pictures, and memories of the simple days—Arvind found himself reflecting on how far he had come. He looked across the room, where his old friend Rajesh sat, his face still as calm and steady as it had been all those years ago. Rajesh had been his confidant, his sounding board, and the one person who had always kept him grounded.

Rajesh was a quiet man, the kind who spoke little but carried great wisdom in his words. In the early days, when Arvind had been struggling to find his path, it was Rajesh who had stood by him, offering encouragement and support. Rajesh had seen him through the lows of his career—the injuries, the losses, the doubts—and had celebrated with him through the highs. They had known each other since childhood, sharing dreams and aspirations. Now, as the years had gone by, Rajesh had remained a constant in Arvind’s life. But lately, Rajesh had been distant, and Arvind couldn’t help but wonder if it was due to the criticism he had been spewing.

“I’ve been thinking, Rajesh,” Arvind said, breaking the silence. “Lately, people have been giving me a hard time. They’re calling me arrogant, even cruel. But I don’t know how to stop. I’m just being honest about what I see.”

Rajesh didn’t respond right away. He simply looked at Arvind, his expression unreadable. Arvind shifted uncomfortably under the gaze of his old friend. He had always looked up to Rajesh for guidance, but now, in this moment of uncertainty, he wasn’t sure if Rajesh would stand by him or rebuke him for his behavior.

Finally, Rajesh spoke, his voice calm but firm. “Arvind, I’ve been hearing about your comments. And I think it’s time we have a talk.”

Arvind felt a knot tighten in his stomach. He had expected this. Rajesh had always been honest with him, even when it was hard to hear.

“You’ve come so far in your career,” Rajesh continued, “but sometimes, you forget the journey that brought you here. You’ve earned respect, but you haven’t earned the right to criticize others just because you’re at the top. Being the best in your field doesn’t make you the authority in every other field.”

Arvind was taken aback. He had never expected Rajesh to challenge him like this. “What do you mean? I’ve been successful because I’ve worked harder than anyone else. I’ve earned my place. And I’m just sharing my thoughts. Why can’t I speak my mind?”

Rajesh smiled softly; his eyes filled with understanding. “Of course, you have the right to speak, Arvind. But speaking your mind isn’t always the same as speaking wisdom. And wisdom, my friend, comes from understanding, not from standing above others and pointing out their flaws.”

Arvind was silent for a moment, processing the words. Rajesh continued, “Let me give you an analogy. Think about the sea. You’re a shark, right? You’ve built your strength, and honed your skills, and you can swim faster and hunt more efficiently than almost anything in the ocean. And that’s great, but just because you’re a shark doesn’t give you the right to criticize the flying skills of an eagle, or the hunting techniques of a lion.”

Arvind frowned, not quite understanding. Rajesh saw the confusion in his eyes and pressed on.

“I’m not saying you shouldn’t be proud of what you’ve achieved. I’m saying that you need to remember that other creatures have their own methods and their own strengths. The eagle soars because that’s what it was built for. The lion hunts because it’s in its nature. But just because you swim in a different domain doesn’t mean you

should question the way they fly or the way they hunt. They have their own journey, their own path to success.”

Rajesh leaned forward slightly; his gaze intense but full of compassion. “You’ve been at the top of your game for a long time now, Arvind. You’re formidable, without a doubt. But if you truly want to be respected, if you want your opinions to matter, you need to focus on your own craft and let others focus on theirs. Be relevant to your own sport, stay in the game, and let your work speak for itself. Only then will you earn the right to comment, and even then, you’ll do so with humility, understanding that your success doesn’t make you an expert in everything?”

Arvind sat back, his mind racing. For the first time in a long time, he felt a sense of clarity. Rajesh was right. He had become so focused on his own success that he had lost sight of the respect he once had for others in different sports. His words, once meant to inspire, had turned into criticisms.

“I’ve been a bit harsh, haven’t I?” Arvind said quietly, the weight of Rajesh’s words sinking in. “I’ve been too quick to judge, thinking that because I’ve made it, I can speak on anything. But I see now that I haven’t earned the right to criticize others like I have my own sport.”

Rajesh nodded, his expression softening. “It’s not too late to change, Arvind. You’re still one of the best. But the true test of your greatness will be how you carry yourself in the face of others’ success. Lift them up, and they will lift you up in return.”

Arvind felt a sense of gratitude wash over him. The advice from his old friend was exactly what he needed to hear. He had always trusted Rajesh’s judgment, and now he realized how much he had missed by focusing too much on his own success and not enough on how he impacted others.

“I’ve got a lot to think about,” Arvind said, his voice filled with sincerity. “I’ve got to get back to the core of who I am and why I

started. It wasn't to tear others down. It was to inspire, to push people to be better. I need to be that person again."

Rajesh smiled, his face breaking into a warm grin. "That's all I've ever wanted for you, Arvind. To remember why you began and to keep that fire burning, not just for yourself, but for others."

As the evening wore on, the two friends reminisced about old times, shared laughs, and even planned to visit their old school. Arvind felt lighter than he had in weeks. He had received the most valuable lesson of his career—not from a coach, not from a mentor, but from the friend who had always believed in him.

The next day, Arvind made a public apology, taking full responsibility for his comments and vowing to be more thoughtful in the future. He understood now that success wasn't just about what you achieved; it was about how you treated others and how you chose to use your platform.

As he took his place once again in the world of sports, he did so with humility, knowing that while being a shark in his own domain was impressive, it was also important to respect the strengths of others, for their journey was just as valid as his own.

If you are a Shark or Dolphin or a Whale, you are formidable undoubtedly! But that still doesn't give you even the slightest right to be a critic of flying skills or hunting technics to be an Eagle. Be in the game, be relevant, and earn the right before choosing to criticize.



The Canvas of Truth & Brushstrokes of Wisdom: Art Beyond Approval



The grand hall was alive with anticipation, buzzing with excited murmurs. The lights dimmed slowly, and the audience settled into their seats. This wasn't just any regular event; this was something special. The renowned painter, Akash Mehta, had been invited for a live interview and painting session. His name had become synonymous with masterpieces, and his work had earned him accolades from every corner of the art world. But Akash wasn't just known for his brushstrokes; he was celebrated for the unique way he brought philosophy, emotion, and depth into every canvas.

On this particular evening, Akash had agreed to do something unprecedented—something that would not only showcase his artistic prowess but also provide the audience with a deeper insight into the mind of an artist. He was going to paint live while being interviewed, allowing the crowd to witness not only the creation of art but also the thoughts that fueled his creativity.

As the lights came up, Akash stepped onto the stage, greeted by the warm applause of the eager crowd. His calm demeanor was striking, exuding an aura of peace and contemplation. His fingers lightly touched the canvas, waiting for the host to start the conversation.

The interviewer, a well-known television personality, began with a warm smile. "It's such an honor to have you here, Akash. You're an inspiration to so many aspiring artists, and your work speaks to

the soul. But tonight, we want to understand not just the technique behind your art, but the heart and mind that guide your brush.”

Akash nodded softly, his eyes twinkling with an inner knowing. The conversation began, flowing easily from one topic to another. They discussed the evolution of his work, his early struggles as a young artist trying to find his voice and the pivotal moments that shaped his career. Akash spoke with clarity and grace, often pausing to reflect as though each word came from a deep place within him.

As he spoke, Akash began to paint, his brush moving effortlessly across the canvas. The audience was captivated not just by his skill, but by the way he seemed to channel his thoughts directly into his art. It was almost as if the two were one—the conversation and the painting flowing in perfect harmony. Each brushstroke seemed intentional, guided by some invisible force, while his words revealed layers of wisdom that went beyond technique.

“Akash,” the interviewer asked after a while, “your paintings often convey such profound emotions. How do you manage to stay so connected to your own truth while creating? Do you ever get distracted by the expectations of others or by what’s trending in the art world?”

Akash paused, his brush hovering above the canvas. He turned to the interviewer, a smile playing at the corners of his lips. “You see, the world will always have opinions. And as an artist, it’s easy to fall into the trap of seeking validation from others. But the key is to remember that art, like life, isn’t about pleasing anyone else. It’s about being true to yourself. I paint because it’s an expression of my own journey, my thoughts, my emotions. If people connect with it, that’s a beautiful by-product. But whether they do or not, the process remains the same. I paint because I must.”

The audience was silent, listening intently, as Akash continued to paint, each stroke bringing the canvas to life. But there was something unusual about this session. It wasn't just an interview about his career or his techniques—it felt more like a meditation, an exploration of the very essence of art and life.

Finally, as the interview neared its end, Akash set his brush down gently. The painting was nearly complete, a beautiful, abstract piece that seemed to speak of both struggle and serenity. The interviewer, sensing the moment of closure, turned toward Akash with a smile.

“Well, Akash, we’ve covered so much tonight. I can only imagine the messages you would want to share with this audience, many of whom are aspiring artists themselves. Before we wrap up, is there anything you’d like to leave them with? Any final thoughts?”

Akash looked at the interviewer, his gaze steady and composed. He stood quietly for a moment, as if in deep contemplation before he turned the tables.

“I’m glad you asked that,” he said with a slight grin. “But instead of giving you my conclusion, I’d like to hear someone else’s. After all, art is not about the artist alone. It’s about the connection we create with others. So, I want to pick someone from the audience and ask them: What is your takeaway from tonight? What have you learned from this live painting session and the conversation we’ve had?”

The room buzzed with excitement as hands shot up. People were eager to have a chance to speak, and to share their thoughts and reflections. Akash scanned the room, his eyes landing on a young man in the front row, his hand raised high with quiet enthusiasm.

“You there,” Akash said, gesturing toward the young man. “Come on up.”

The young man stood, slightly nervous but excited, and made his way to the stage. He stood there for a moment, looking at Akash and the nearly completed painting. Then, with a deep breath, he spoke.

“First of all,” he began, “thank you for giving me this chance. I’m a painter myself, but I’ve always struggled with doubts—doubts about whether my work is good enough, and whether it will be accepted by others. But after hearing you speak and watching you paint; I’ve realized something that will stay with me forever. Your message really struck me.”

He paused, collecting his thoughts, then looked directly at Akash.

“My takeaway, my lesson, is this: ‘Do and gather by yourself everything needed. And start painting a picture yourself. Don’t give up until it is completed.’ What you’ve shared today, about the process, about painting for yourself and not for the world’s approval—it’s something I’ve never fully understood until now. We often think that art must be made for others to like, but you’ve shown me that the real power of painting, of creating anything, comes from within. It comes from knowing what you want to bring into the world, and doing so with all your heart. And the rest—whether the world likes it or not—is a by-product that doesn’t matter as long as you’re in a state of deep meditation while creating. As long as you know you did your best, that’s all that matters.”

The room was silent. The young man’s words hung in the air like a breath held, and Akash stood there, a serene smile crossing his face. The audience felt the weight of his wisdom, the truth in the simplicity of his message.

“Thank you,” Akash said, his voice soft but powerful. “You’ve just learned one of the most important lessons an artist can have. And I’m glad it resonates with you. As for the rest of us, it’s up to each

individual to paint their own picture—whatever that picture may be. Whether it’s art, life, or anything else, it’s your canvas. Don’t let anyone else dictate what should be on it.”

The young man nodded; his face bright with realization. He had come seeking answers, but in that moment, he had found something far greater than he had expected.

As the evening ended, the audience stood in ovation, not just for the masterpiece that had been created before their eyes, but for the profound lessons they had learned. Akash Mehta had done more than simply paint; he had opened their eyes to the deeper truth of creation—the importance of authenticity, self-expression, and the quiet peace of following one’s own path.

And as the applause echoed through the hall, Akash stood there, knowing that this was not just the end of a session, but the beginning of a new journey for all those who had listened—not just with their ears, but with their hearts.

*Do and gather by yourself everything needed... And start painting
a picture yourself... Don't give up until it is completed!*
