

Challenges and motivation : A journey from a student to a professional

I remember an incident from my childhood, when she was of 12, there was a competition, it was a kiddish one, run to the chair that's 100 meters away, then to break the balloons in the chair and then run back to where we started. she along with some 20 participants of my age were there, as soon as the whistle blew up, she ran so fast and grabbed the chair, but due to her speed, she collapsed and fell down along with the chair, everyone around, there were more than 200 people watching the competition, all of them laughed, the sounds were high, but the little girl didn't listen to them nor reacted to them. She stood up immediately, placed the chair and then started bursting the balloons. She burst it so fast and ran back and you know what she came first! The same crowd that laughed at her, clapped at her. After her reaching the finishing line the 2nd person was even able to burst their balloons fully. If the little girl had cried or stopped or felt embarrassed and left the ground, the laughter would have stayed as humiliation alone. But the way she didn't give it up and had hope on herself, the confidence, that's the thing. That little girl is none other than the one who is narrating you the story. In life, this made a huge impact on me, confidence is everything. Self belief is all that I needed. The one who did a little near to none when coming to competitions started to walk in everything and gave a try with confidence.

After certain years, when I didn't give my best in exams and couldn't get the college I dreamt of, I was totally broken. All my confidence, self-esteem went off. Someone who had seen all winnings throughout, had the first failure in her entire life. I was closed to a shell, bared talked to anyone, just had one friend and wanted her company wherever I go. Then came competitions. Competitions that I loved my to participate on, but yeah I needed a company. I wanted to explore a lot as from my past experiences I love exploring things! Someone there was a little bit of inferiority complex and I always needed a person with me. I was in a search for a like minded person. In search of a person to accompany by me, I was asking one of my friend to come with me. She used to say we would go but she never came at all. Eventually I missed events for almost a semester. Then after realising these things, I started going on my own. No one of my class even went for some events that I was actually interested. Slowly after seeing me some came out but not that one friend of mine, because that person never wanted to. Fast-forward to today where I have my own team of like minded , friendly, supportive, caring friends and team by my side. All happened because of my one decision to

come out of the shell and the consistency in doing what I loved. I learnt that you will get nothing until you work for it.

Meanwhile there were some bullies around my circle, who would always talk in such a way that the hurt. They would make fun of my and my friends getting continuous OD's from college to participate in events. In actually we were doing something that they couldn't. we didn't pay attention to them at all, we didn't even talk to them or took seriously about what they said, fast forward to this day, it's the same people who congratulate on our wins. It's the same people asking how did you do it. Most importantly what I realised is this that , those who talked about us, are still just talking, they didn't do anything much since they were busy in talking while we were busy in creating what we were interested at. Yup, it's important to figure out what's important and what's not. What you focus on grows! Just like how its said, keep quite and let your success make the noise, I felt it that day.

During my school days, I was a good student but not so good at math. I used to score not so well in it after 7th, sometimes I hated the teacher who taught, sometimes I couldn't understand the way she spoke and tried to explain us. I was scoring average marks till 9th. Then came 10th the most imp year as a student. I got into tuition, where in he used to say I lacked basics a lot, yup I knew I did. In school and tuition I continued to study hard and juggling between tuitions for science and maths, there used to be people who mocked at me for having continuous tuition. But at the end during results, all those who mocked me got lesser marks than me. Maybe it's all hard work that gets you what you deserve. Sometimes it doesn't matter you are talented or blessed or whatever, it matters whether you are passionate enough to put in the work. Consistency is directly proportional to the growth, in some cases it might be exponential too.

Throughout the academic journey, being a person who focused on studies and grades, though it was necessary, it was going out of my zone in order to get things done. I learnt that consistent efforts can make even the mountain tasks a cake walk, it just takes time. later I realised the sleeps I sacrificed could actually have caused me mentally and emotionally. The pressure to excel academically and maintain high grades can create stress and anxiety.

Work-life balance: thinking about this, I regret a bit being bad at this. I used to come home and freshen up and go to my study table. went for dinner, studied for an hour more and slept. I had very less or no family time. writing this out, pondering it out let me discover the fact and research about how to get a good work-life balance. personal development: this is the

domain I have been working since some years. comparing leads to just mental stress. being a person interested in multiple skills, I used to juggle a lot and get things out of it. not just work skills, communication skills also so matter a lot.

Motivation: When I faced a lot of challenges, only a few I could recollect it out here. One thing I knew, it was getting harder as the years passed on, but I did realise I was handling the situations better with each moving year. Naturally I had a good amount of patience and listening skill that made certain hard stuffs easy for me, that gave me edge over people who lacked it a bit and deal things calmly. Something that keeps me going through tough days is, by being grateful for what I have. I sometimes take a time to reflect on things that I observe and that I go through. I am grateful for having what ever I have. I visited an orphanage recently, that was the moment I realised how those kids badly craved for the life that we live. That just meant that we live the lives of their dreams and yet not satisfied with that? Somewhere in the run of having more, we shouldn't forget being thankful for what we have. Those kids didn't do anything wrong to be there, they were actually kind in nature. We all are blessed in unknown ways by the universe to have whatever we have. Rather than regretting on what's not here with us, focusing on what we have, what can be done with what we have is all that I needed, I realised this lately. After that visit, I decided it for myself that, one day when I will be financially independent, I want to help such kids. Who knows they too might land a good life? Somewhere the urge to work more increased within me after that one day. Coming to professional life, all the learnings that I learnt to be a student did help me in a lot of ways, but I had to learn to manage stress and work pressure in internships. How I was no more a kid, how even my small mistake can affect an organisation, how I was responsible for everything I do, every little thing that I do. Being accountable to certain things, holding up huge responsibilities was not new but in work it was different. Professional things are so different from personal. One should never mix both. A person is professionally and personally different in order to be good at both. Being sincere at work sometimes can bring a conflict, someone can scold you for not doing the work properly, but taking that personally can affect you mentally and that isn't the solution for the problem. I learnt this after working in my internship and after working in organising committee multiple times in ieee and in my college events. In order to get a good output, being strict isn't wrong, yet one should communicate in a way that it doesn't hurt anyone out there. It's important to consider human emotions too when we talk. It's important to maintain a good physical health as well as a mental peace. I would like to conclude that the challenges that we go through our life is not to

knock us down, they are meant to shape us for the future that we were going to have. The iron that gets the more heated gets in to the best shape, similarly our challenges lead us to a better life and managing and handling it well gives us the lessons that we needed. All my challenges shaped me to be a good professional, and that was my journey from student to a professional.

- Author : L Nandini