



oh!!!

wo-(man-ia)

[woo-m-uh-nia] noun, abstract most of the times, raw, unadulterated, ridiculously suave

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editorial

DIBA
YAMINI

June is here. The month of re-genesis, monsoons. This month onwards the nature expresses like never before. Sometimes there is a harsh drought, or unbelievable downpour creating havoc in our lives. Time passes, and the seasons change, the calendar changes too. But one thing that remains constant is the human inquisitiveness.

We, as humans are always looking for answers. And most of the time, when we tell people what we are seeking, we fail to tell the exact thing that we are looking for. We come up with answers like happiness, peace, calmness, nirvana. Sometimes, people don't even seek anything; they simply join the bandwagon and pretend to chase what seems to be the most important goal. When asked, they say, they are doing it because everyone else is.

The simple truth of human lives is very basic. There is only one ultimate purpose, but that one purpose is achieved through different journeys. But the most astoundingly perplexing question that stands today is – What is the purpose, and How to get there?

There has to be questions, to seek answers. Without questions in its place, it is very very difficult to arrive at a conclusion.

This is not about the practice of yoga or meditation or attaining nirvana. This is a very simple thing that eases a lot of situations. In technical and engineering field we call it the 5-Why analysis.

Whenever there is a problem, we dig until the 5th why is answered. That guides us to the root cause. And that is where we start addressing the problem and make sure it is taken care at the root level.

Let's take a problem statement for instance:

"India is unsafe for women"

- 1. Why? : Because of increasing number of rapes, molestation and other crimes*
- 2. Why? : Because of the pertinent male dominance in the Indian society*
- 3. Why? : Because of the discrimination between men and women*
- 4. Why? : Because men are more educated, powerful and have the right to rule women*
- 5. Why? : Because women are not educated and do not of equal opportunities.*

By the end of 5th Why, the answer is pretty clear to my problem. The root cause is "Education". Each and every Indian must be educated. Men and women alike. There may be different answers to these Whys, from different people. This is my personal problem assessment technique.

Like, Dr. Huban Gowadia, in her talk said, "Every suicide bomber has to get his mother's permission, it wouldn't happen if the mother were educated."

So ask questions. Asking questions is very very important. Unless there are questions in place, you will never find answers.

I have been asking more questions than ever before! Did I find answers to them? Not necessarily, but I know what to look for.

This edition, we are doing the same. Seeking and Sorting.

Join us!

~Editors

“Make sure the urgency is never lost” – Dr.Huban Gowadia

contributed by Sarvesh Iyer

Today I had a chance to attend an informal session with Dr. Huban Gowadia. She is the director of the US department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (A post to which she was appointed by president Obama) and has been serving in that post since September 2013.

A strict proponent of feminism, she was discussing her life being an immigrant from India and the challenges associated with growing up in a stereotypical environment where she was fortunate to have a family who never discouraged her from pursuing the dreams in a male dominated society. She was also discussing her experience after immigration and interacting with the “Citizens of the wider world” and importance of working as a team in today's competitive world. She was very soft spoken and had an air of simplicity in her demeanor which is quite rare for the person who is holding a position that requires demanding leadership.

Below are some of the excerpts from her talk. I must say, I fell in love with this lady. :)

- 1) **On having an inquisitive mind: “There is no such thing as pushing the envelope on questions....so ask, ask and keep asking.”**
- 2) **On how to pursue your goals: “Make sure the urgency is never lost.”**
- 3) **On being asked how she would define herself: “I am a startup artist and have no idea how to work on a steady state.”**
- 4) **On being self-aware: “You have to know what your flaws are.”**
- 5) **On being ready for the job: “If you are perfectly ready for your next job, you will get bored on day-2.”**
- 6) **On being open to new tasks: “Not my job is not your option.”**
- 7) **On confidence: “If you are confident on who you are, people around you will be confident as well.”**
- 8) **On getting out of the comfort zone: “Get comfortable on being uncomfortable...work on early stage of your career on developing a good GUT.”**
- 9) **On sometimes not knowing what we want in life: “I am an abject failure on what I wanted to be, but I would never trade on what I am today.”**
- 10) **On learning: “Keep your mind open and learn as much as you can.”**
- 11) **On believing in yourself: “It's really hard to keep a good person down, they always find a way out.”**
- 12) **On being asked the importance of education for women: “Every suicide bomber has to get his mother's permission, it wouldn't happen if the mother were educated.”**
- 13) **On leadership: “My leadership style (according to my boss) is PARTICIPATORY DICTATORSHIP.”**
- 14) **On how to lead a team of people with different personalities: “You must lead people the way they want to be lead, not the way you want to lead them.”**

She said that women were slowly making their way into technical jobs and her dream is to see women being directors in national labs. She also said that she did not face any discrimination for being an immigrant in leading up to the position she is in today. “This land embraces you and meeting people from around the world lends you an amazing perspective to life.”

Stuck?? WTF

I see how people are stuck and refuse to move on. Let's talk about relationships. Some work, some don't. It is not necessary that you keep finding reasons to stay when it is obvious that you should leave.

Don't the guys say "Had she not come in my life, I would have been better off?" or "Had I not met her, I would have been a successful man, would have chased my dreams and would have lived more sensibly?"



How many girls don't cry thinking about their breakups, wondering "If only..." I may sound crazy if I say "Move on", because I personally know how difficult it is to "Move on". But what's the point in being Stuck? Eventually a negative emotion ruins you!

Seeing someone you love, settle with someone else seems like a punch on the face, a kick on the balls and

I read a blog about a girl who talked about her relationship with her ex-boyfriend who used to abuse her physically. When there is so much trouble and pain, how can one not see a reason to let go and break free?

If I empathize, I would try to stick to the relationship only with a hope that he becomes a better person someday, and stops physically abusing me. On hindsight, I think, if anyone disrespects you, for any thing, any reason, repeatedly, over and over, doesn't deserve an iota of love or respect in return. So I would have more reasons to dump him than stay with him.

Why do wives, whose husbands abuse them, still stay? It is only because of the pressure of the society and future of their children. That's another topic altogether to talk about! What if there were no social pressures. Let me tell you.. there is none. Whatever you see, is a farce. It's all an illusion. You were always meant to live free! Believe it!

How would you see a situation where you can constantly observe your partner moving away from you, convincing you that things won't work, and still you keep clinging with a hope that someday it might?

Aren't you ruining the chances that life is giving you? Aren't there possibly a thousand more amazing things that you could be doing with your life, than surviving in a hope that goes against all odds?

And after some time, you start blaming things on relationships or situations that did not work. The blame is not on anyone else. But you! You could have moved on, if you dared!

We are not necessarily stuck only in Love. We are stuck in hate too. Hate is absence of love. And as long as you are looking for something you don't want to find, it stays absent in your life. And you are left with Hate!

a dagger in your heart...But how does one deal with it?

Stay Stuck, cry and make life miserable? Or simply explore the love within, which was always there, and try some other way to let it out?

I had never heard of a term called "Mutual breakup" until a few days ago! Towards the end of the post, let me opine on what I think of love.

Love is merely a feeling. A beautiful one, that. You can never PROPOSE love, you can only EXPRESS it. You can only FEEL it. You propose a relationship, or marriage!

If the proposal is let down, does it mean the love dies? It doesn't. Love is always there, it always was! The proposal dies eventually! With the proposal, the hope dies. And so do the dreams. But if you wiggle that little corner of your heart, you'll always find LOVE. It never goes anywhere!

So, for me, love is always stuck in my heart! I, personally, am stuck nowhere! That is what I would like to believe! So move on!

How difficult is it for you, not to stay STUCK?

Hit and NOT Run!



Bruise. My dad is an Honest government servant, and just too simple to say much, he was already too hurt about the whole deal and was in tears himself. This man who cant kill a fly, was being prosecuted like anything.

I am not advocating reckless drivers nor my father is one, but i dont understand kids jumping on the roads or playing on the roads. Are roads meant for that, what do you do when people come infront of your car? You apply breaks or abruptly change lane, causing the car behind you to bump into you.

He did not ram into the footpath or pavement, he was driving on the road, and he wasn't drunk. But he was being accused, a police complain was lodged. He had to pay

compensation and get the boy's treatment done failing which the mob leader warned him of dire consequences.

My sister being a doctor knew it was a minor superficial bruise, no fracture no internal injury. But the hospital kept him under observation for 3 weeks under false pretences. The mob was in the hospital all the while. The hospital prescribed heavy and expensive medicines, which perhaps were given to the kid or who knows. The per day charge of the room was exhorbitant, well someone had to pay for the new building and equipments and what's better than a scared and blackmailed good samaritan!

Its not about rich or poor, it is about Not taking advantage of someone's goodness! You run not because you are inhuman, but because you are scared that you might be killed or jailed or attacked by the mob. And, if you, inspite of all these fears, decide to help, you are still abused, ridiculed, tortured, blackmailed and taken advantage of. Yes accidents happen, that is why they are called accidents. But that doesn't give you the right to take advantage.

My dad did not speed, he did not drink and drive, he did not actualy hit, he did not ram into the pavement.... And well nor did he Run! He was still tortured for a month, had to be there in the hospital, inspite of his office work and pay the bill everyday, he was called constantly by the mob for money or attendance even in the middle of the night. Why? All this for being human? All this for not running and helping instead?

He never takes that godforsaken road now. If someone is not running but accepting his fault and helping – Respect his courage, Accept his apologies, Try to forgive him and Dont torture him such that he thinks before helping anyone again!

While reading Mr Acharya's much famed Hit and Run write-up and mockery of Salman's Being Human efforts (for no good reason), it suddenly struck me, I have something to share, too.

My Dad is a soft-hearted and extremely simple and loving person. He is a slow, like painfully slow Driver. He once had a hit and NOT run incident.

He was returning home with my sister, who then, was an MBBS final year student. In India, sadly apart from main roads the towns have no roads. Like yes, they are tarred and plain and all, but no pavements and here I am advocating Nobody!

So the lanes, the so called Gullies are the ones we have to take in the absence of main road connectivity. Well we know how our smaller roads are, they are cricket pitches, badminton courts, cow shelter, dustbins, well anything but roads.

Dad in his santro was as usual driving at his snail-speed, a kid suddenly jumped into the middle of the road out of nowhere. Fortunately my dad's driving and speed did save him, but he got a minor bruise on his ankle.

The driver here – my dad – wasn't speeding, he was not drunk, he doesnt drink. And being the soft hearted soul that my dad is, he stopped the car, to check the kid. He was terribly sorry and I can vouch for that. Thankfully the kid was not badly hurt. But, all the people from the road abutting Slums gathered and starting yelling and shouting and abusing my Dad. My sister was petrified and Dad had no clue what to say. He took the boy in the car and went to the Hospital. My sister was a government college student and could have easily had him admitted in the government hospital, but the mob was growing violent and they wanted to go to a Private hospital.

The kid was admitted to a newly opened, posh private hospital. The self appointed mob leader, asked for compensation of 50,000/- a sum too large for the minor

My unexpected co-passengers

I was travelling from Delhi to Bhopal. My first lone travel by train. I was petrified. The what-ifs had clouded my mind and it was difficult to think straight.

Nevertheless, I had to brave the journey. While I nervously took my seat in Shatabdi Express, my eyes scanned my precincts. Yes, I had few staring eyes – those murky monsters here and there. And well, the seat near me was empty.



Phew! Hold on, an Indian train with empty seat is a Myth! So no, I got the company of a beetle stained, Guthka chewing, rustic Uncle.

Intermittently he would go.. “Nom nom Nom...Khrrrrr”.

I wondered at my luck. What's the probability of a hot hunk sitting beside you ever? Zero!

He did stare and scare me off though, and I kept praying that he gets off the train at the next station.

Finally, he did get off at Mathura. I was happy and relieved.

But my happiness was short-lived. Almost all passengers got off at Jhansi. Bad company or No company what's scarier?? Well, no-one in your friggin' bogie is indeed scary!

I was nearing hysteria when I heard too much noise. Finally some people were boarding the train. But to my horror, I saw a crowd of eunuchs entering my bogie from everywhere. Imagine my state!

I was told stories of Hijras taking money and doing all sorts of indecent things, if you don't give them money!

Somewhere I also knew that they don't trouble girls. But the bogie was empty! Almost! And why would they spare me?!

Soon the compartment was full of them and just one other family of three. I felt like crying, I swore I would never travel alone, I just wanted them out of the train. The beetle-chewing Uncle was better. I had started to like the sound he was making!

No, the empty bogie was better! Rather! I don't know. I lost the power to think. Time passed and they settled after their long pandemonium.

As I observed them, through the corner of my eye, I realized they were normal people. Normal people, travelling to Bhopal for their All India Conference. They were not asking for money, not doing anything indecent or annoying. They were just enjoying their journey.

Hearing them talk, I realized their discussions were actually fun. They had all sorts of stories to tell. One of them kept asking why the window wouldn't open. The steward told them it's an 'AC compartment'.

In their peculiar tone, they cursed the railways for putting them in a closed compartment, for so such a costly ticket. How they wanted the fresh air to flirt with their faces! I was, kinda awestruck. I started to feel at ease. They were normal. Just like me, or anyone else!

NORMAL!

Furthermore, they were excited to open their tiffin boxes and relish their meals, when suddenly we all were served with – Supper. They did not understand the breadsticks that came with the soup, in Shatabdi, and instead preferred their own meal that they were carrying.

Their leader, Ruksana, who was sitting beside me, offered me a share, too. I sheepishly denied, while I kept thinking how wrong I was, how stupid I was, to judge them according to the perceived notions, which are almost always wrong.

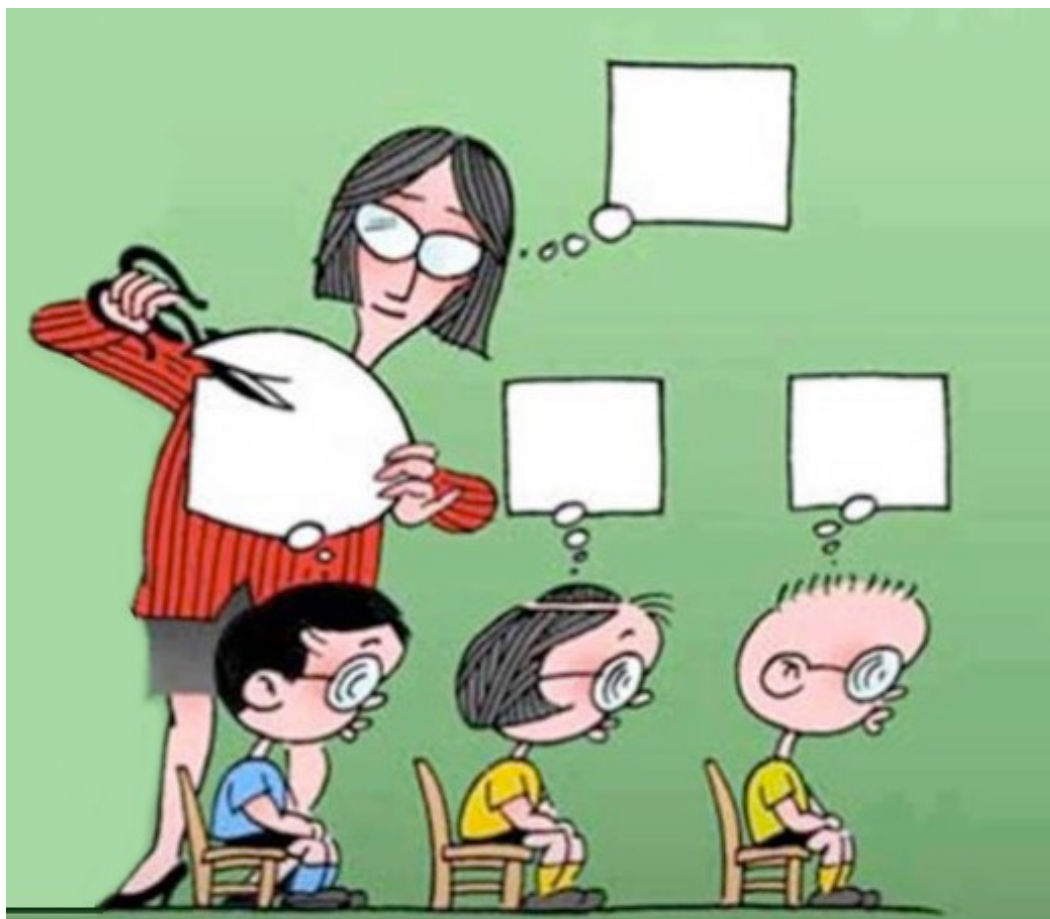
I, in fact, felt safe with them, happy too. And I had a story to tell, so that no- one thinks any less of them. I wish them happiness because they surely brought a smile to my face.

Virgin Expressions

Most people I know are very very creative. In their own ways. I always say Living is an art. And if you do it well, and are able to document it any form, then you have expressed! Sometimes I strive to be better at things. Like writing. Or somedays, sketching. Or on some days, I want to be the best darn singer out there.. You won't believe, when I say, that sometimes I choreograph entire songs in my head and the steps keep repeating every time I hear the same song. I am the best dancer there even could be... if they looked inside my head!

I am just sharing how wonderful it is to write, without knowing that you are writing. It is so wonderful to start making those baseless strokes not anticipating that there will be picture out of it. It is this mindfulness that I let go.. and let things take it course, without forcing anything, without trying to achieve anything, without trying to be anything.

And then the nature reveals itself. I do not express, something else expresses through me, and I know there is so much more beyond what seems to be. There is this hidden you,



Yes! And on some days, I just feel mediocre. And those are the days when, if I pick up a pen to write or sketch, I end up doing the best job. Because that is not "Me" who is doing it. It is my soul. Seeking an outlet. Expressing what it couldn't, when "I" was trying to do a dozen things, I deemed perfect.

I realised there is another state to be – natural. Original. Unadulterated. Without any pressure. A state of sheer non-expectation of anything that you might want to do. Forget the result. Forget the aim you would want to achieve. Just do.

Lately, I have started doing things that way. And I do not even find the need to document it, or put it up somewhere, or publish. Because those tiny pieces of expressions, in whatever forms they came out were beautiful. No, I am not saying how talented I am, or how amazing I am. No! Don't get me wrong. I am not trying to boast about how well I do things.

someone else, that really needs to exist, but is shoved in a dungeon time and again by the farce that we all live in.

"Write in rhymes. Sketch with a 2B pencil. Have a head and tail to your story. Don't cook without salt. Dance with expressions!" WHY?

Have you known the beauty of poetry when it doesn't rhyme?

Have you known the beauty of the lines that a toddler draws on those well-painted walls.

Have you cooked without salt and experienced the real taste of the ingredients? Like they originally were. Natural. Unadulterated.

Have you begun a story and not ended it. Have you begun an article..and...

Well!

Social Conditioning

She is a child, ignorant and vulnerable. She knows no death, no fear, no pride. She does not understand tears, sadness or remorse. She is blank, she stays quiet, she talks to invisible friends.

you see a lizard. She is conditioned in a way that she behaves so even if she doesn't feel so.

She was naive and innocent, her world was simple and

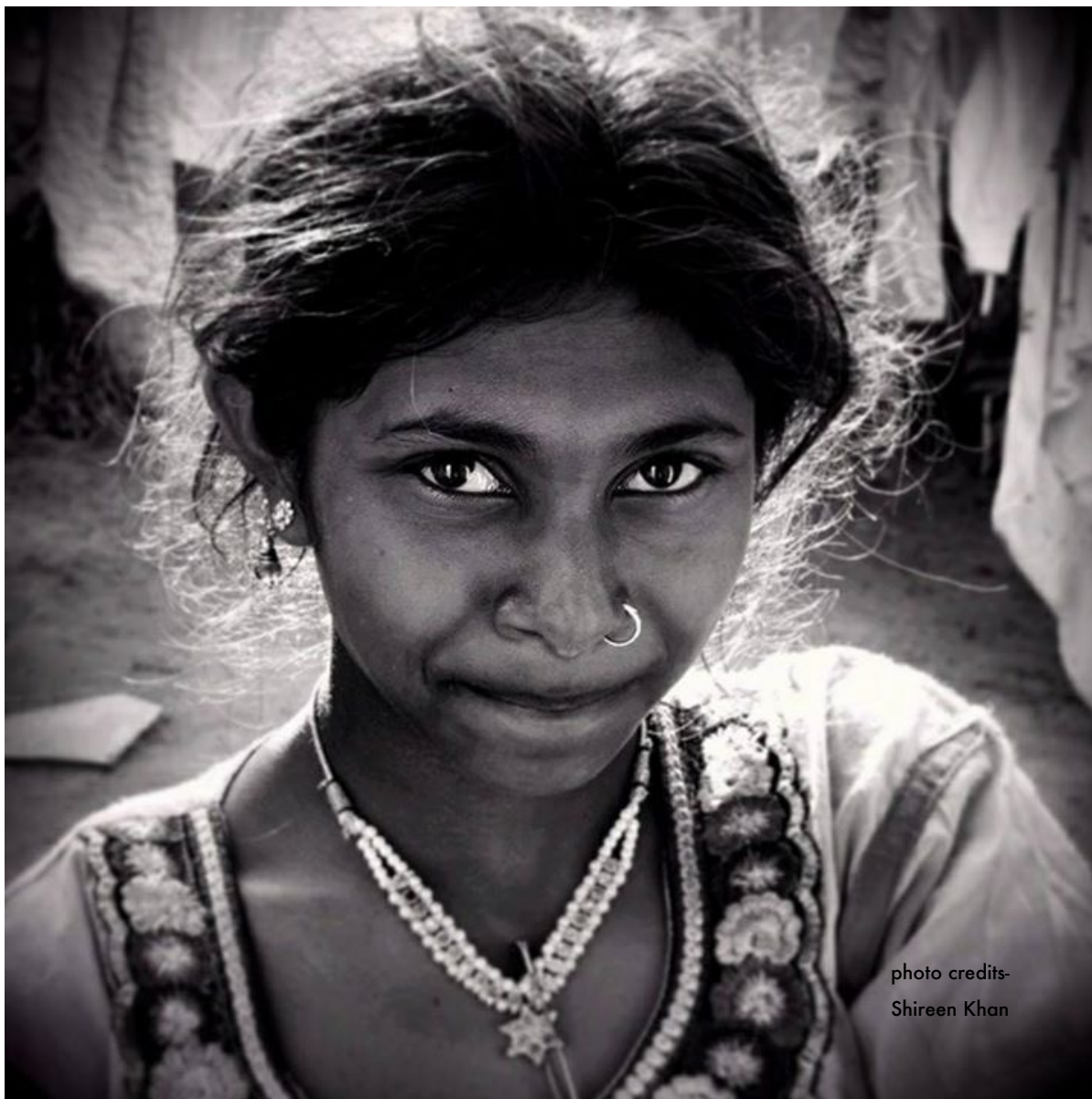


photo credits-
Shireen Khan

Then she is exposed to the flawed society. Talking to invisible friends is now madness, staying quiet is now being stupid. Tears are a shield and used for defense.

Beauty she knew nothing about is now everything. She has learnt that being fair is beautiful, being slim is beautiful; long-shiny hair is beautiful. The television is her view of the beautiful world. The make-up clad, bejeweled and heavily dressed women are her idols.

She is told about the things you should fear, and there is a god you should fear. Night is scary, you need to scream when

different, now she is conditioned and follows norms.

Everything she has to learn, she has to be perfect - so that someone marries her. Maths, Hindi and English make her eligible for marriage. Cooking, stitching, cleaning is what she should excel in. Everything she does now has a focus – to get a nice groom.

How badly conditioned a society are we?

In which beauty of a person is superficial and the mind is programmed. In which a child is gradually turned into a robot?

Minimalism

Last evening, the door squeaked, drawing my attention to it. The monsoons have rendered the doors useless. I turned back and looked at the door, almost immediately, sensing a similar figure to appear! I hoped it would be mom, getting me a cup of tea. But it wasn't tea, it wasn't mom either and I wasn't home. I was

lying on my bed, listening to some music, I've lately developed a liking for, and flipping pages of a book I've been meaning to read. Lying on my bed. The same bed where I have lived for over two years now, in a PG. Here in Bangalore!

When I first came to Bangalore I thought I would stay in this one room, for sometime and then find my way to a better apartment. But comfort zones are too bad. They are delusional. And that's one place I started liking, eventually. I made more money and saved more. I did not like the idea of unnecessarily paying over 12k a month for a 1 bhk rented apartment. But that really isn't the reason, I realised.

When people ask me, why have I stuck to this one room, one bed arrangement since over two years, I tell them, that the arrangement is nice, safe and the food is good. To people who are still closer to me, I tell them, I get to save a lot of money this way.

But the reason is something else, I realised. I wasn't satisfied with all the talks I kept telling people when I was posed with this question.

Yesterday, I was thinking about mom and her unending ways of loving me (read – yelling at me). Nearing 30 is a good thing I thought, unless you are scolded by your mom for petty things. I don't like it. But I let her do it. Keep the cup properly. Sit up on the chair and have tea. Tie your hair. What's with those crazy bangs? Fold the clothes. Put the towel in the right place. How many pairs of shoes do you need? And it goes on. She loves me a lot.

But now, I am all sorted. I have only one coffee mug. I don't have anything extra. Just one plate, one spoon, one bowl, a mug and two towels. I use them in turns. Everything falls in its place and there is never a chance for anyone to yell at me.

Even if my mom would come and stay here, things would be placed perfectly by default. There wouldn't be a single thing she would have to yell at. Then what would she love(yell at) me for? Will that be all? I wish I never get to hear those complains about how I can be a better person. Everyone keeps telling me about it. My mom wishes I get better at maintaining things. My sister wishes I dress up better. My friends wish I lose some weight and look sexy. Other people wish I talked to them. And then the others.. I don't know! There is always so much more to do. It is never enough.

Coming back to the topic, I was awestruck by the concept of "Minimalism", when I realised I was actually following it. Having only what you need. It's not that I am living in a small room, on a small bed because I cannot afford a bigger place. I can. But I don't need it. Is it too claustrophobic? People might think! But nothing is too closed for a mind which knows how to fly and wander. I have never felt the need to move out of my current setup. But this setup is nothing close to

what people with 6 years of experience in MNCs have. This is not it. People have bigger houses, cars, bigger things on display. I have none of those. Why? I think I have started to love things as they are. I do not "want" things which are clunky, or which occupy space. It's more of a mental thing. I feel free, I like lesser stuff around me.

It's strange that I have become this person. It is not a sudden realisation, but I have been asking myself these questions and constantly I find myself looking not for these trivial things, but for something more.

Now what is that something more? I don't know!



Mind your Business

You know how kids ask embarrassing questions at times. "Mommy where did I come from?". "Daddy, what are those doggies doing?"... The inquisitiveness of a child is a priced gift. Address it. And please do not mind your business when it comes to attending to the questions your child asks. That little kid is a result of your business you've had sometime in past! So address it. Such that, the kid is not informed incorrectly about the facts of life, but also the curiosity is satisfied.

THIS IS YOUR BUSINESS

When you are going gaga over the swachhta abhiyan of Modi saab, and complimenting the clean railway stations. Don't look at litter on the road and complain about an irresponsible citizen. You are a responsible citizen. Stop spitting on road, if you see someone, educate them. If you see a passerby litter, tell them, if you see the road dirty, take initiative and address the issue. Don't shrug and say "It's none of my business".

THIS IS YOUR BUSINESS!



<http://www.freevectors.net/files/large/PlantWithWater.jpg>

You have Air conditioners in all your rooms? Great! How about planting same number of trees in your compound, so that, the environment becomes cooler, overall. Don't watch someone shoving the concrete in the ground and cutting the trees. Don't say, you've got your climate control equipment in your bedrooms, and you needn't care about the environment. Don't say, it's not your business. Don't say, it's not your home, and you don't care. The earth is your home, and you should care!

THIS IS YOUR BUSINESS.

cover speaks

Genesis!

Life, it has so many genesis and re-genesis. At the on-set of monsoons we wanted to dig a little deeper into this aspect of birth, growth, of start and re-start. Our mind in a powerhouse of ideas and thoughts. A thinking mind is a live wire! As long as we think and question and stay curious we will continue to be in the process of re-genesis. So we invite you to think, to open up and to unleash and free your mind!

When Bruce became Catelyn!

D: Kim ka dad

D: Bruce

D: Became a woman

D: Caitlyn

D: Bas.... Thats taken d internet ovrr

Y: He's funny

Y: She clearly says she's not attracted to men

D: I din read anytyn bout her... whn u hav such daughters i think u also wana b a woman who can

And how we talked about her....umm...him....her??!!

N: What do you think about gender change or sex change operations

D: Un natural i dun like

Y: Thats fine.. I think if u r not comfortable in ur own skin n feel the need then ok

D: If u wana b u can shave n b beautiful

N: Cool

N: Yaar iske pass paisa to sab chochle

N: What about those who are poor and cant afford such surgeries?

D: But then its ther wish

D: Tis caitlyn is for publicity

N: Obvio

N: Wo former athlete tha

D: N jenners kardis r morons of the first order

N: Haha!!! Agreed

D: U c hw they insult nature by gettin ugly wit surgeries

D: So i m indiff to dat clan

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Teacher: MAC pages and MS word

choli ke peeche

Because, Friendship!

Y: I. Give such confident gyaan.. Three. Levels of fship

D: One is on lvl thats superficial talks

D: Thats wt v do most

Y: I dun even know whT it means

Y: Hau.. N u dissect it and make sense out if it

Y: And we feel like wise women

D: Lol

Y: Like thr never existdd before

D: N u criticise ppl for talk such

Y: Pagle hai re baba apan

Y: But fship requires one level. Of. Madness if not anything else

Y: That has to be thr

D: Hau

D: Damn wt vl i do witout yal

Easy definition of Love!

D: Abbe oh koi pyaar nahi wo waar tha

Y: Lol

Y: Most pyaars r waars

D: :D

PS: We have read the comments and taken up a few pointers too. How much we follow and stay in our senses, is all up to the rotation and revolution of the earth! We are unapologetic, but we sincerely respect feedbacks and we couldn't have been more thankful! :)

So keep 'em coming.

Until Next time:

Note: All the typos in the posts are intentional. If you haven't found any, Congratulations!

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More light, more power to everyone!

Help spread the love with Diba and Yamini :)