

The glass is always half empty



RAHUL GUPTA

It has been more than an hour and we are almost at the end of my interview, when the head of the company asks me if I would like to have a drink. Seemed to be an innocuous question and I was thirsty with all the talking. Just as I had said “yes”, a glass of water kept on the side of the table was promptly moved before me.

I was hesitant to take it as it was only half full and as if reading my mind, I was asked, “Do you think this glass is half full or half empty?” Wondering where this question was leading, I said without hesitation that it is half empty.

With sideways glance amongst the interviewers, I wondered if I had gone wrong somewhere.

Those days this question was not a cliché and hence I was not prepared and answered from instincts.

The person who offered the glass to me said that I was a pessimist, as an optimist would see it as a glass half full. It was a dismissive statement and I knew it was over. However, I could not leave till I explained what it meant to me.

So I explained “I feel that a half full glass is a great beginning for there is already something to start with. However the half empty for me is not really empty. It offers me an opportunity of filling it with something that I want to; at the pace it can be done and at intervals that I feel are comfortable. At the end of it, I have a glass full of achievement, memories and a taste that I can savor for times to come.”

Drinking the water, I left with a polite thank you. Reflecting upon the event, almost 22 years ago, I still feel good at what I said for the philosophy, which by now has become engraved in my approach to life, lifting inspirations through metaphors around me and filling my glass with romances of life.

It has been a long journey for me since the interview but I have still not stopped dreaming and doing new things, discovering myself along the way.

Numerous experiences, a few wrong judgments, many small successes and an appetite to discover more is where I find myself today.

There are few important turning points and mine came by following a few lines written by a young destitute girl, which caught my eye during a business meeting and evoked in me the desire to follow my own path. “It took me many years to understand that I had to lose all known territories to start afresh

and find new ones, ones that form a new heritage, where you meet up with your ancestors, you have never heard of before. I was not afraid then, nor am I today, I need to know who I am.”

I resigned a few weeks later to plunge into a whirlpool of uncertainty where I could truly discover myself. In this course of life, I learnt a few very important lessons which I would like to share.

BE YOURSELF - One could have said the obvious and walked away with it but the tough competition for one vacancy was won not on a different answer, but with an answer that conveyed my individualism and conviction.

BE SURE - I don't hesitate in my reply and thereby there is no conflict in choosing the right answers. This reflects a clear line of thinking which makes a person spontaneous and yet one who knows what he/she is talking.

BE SMART - There is a tendency of being over smart in situations. No one likes to be proved wrong. Smartness means, I may agree to disagree but here

are my reasons which are shaped out of my own experiences.

BE A RISK TAKER - People say it's safe to be balanced. In life however, one has to take risks. It should be calculated before, but it is no good to be at a place where the comfort zone is very high but sense of satisfaction is low.

BE HEARD - It does no good when people don't speak up for what they believe in. It is important to be heard for which one needs to have the right logic, a pleasant tone said with a sense of firmness and conviction.

BE A DREAMER - It is not easy but try and be a master of your own destiny, doing things that ignite you, create a path that meanders through your passions and be what you want to be.

As they say “journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step” take yours with confidence and don't be afraid if you realize that it was not the right one. The journey of life is long and everything teaches us something valuable.

As for me, I am still adding to my glass, it is no longer half empty and I don't want it to spill over, not as yet. [CC](#)

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