Dr. Das -My Guru

Description

I wasnâ??t sure about what was that blatant mistake committed by my father. But he was summoned one day; way back in 1986 by the then police commissioner of our city. Ignorant of what had happened and worried sick, I had accompanied him to the commissionerâ??s office.

â??General Education for Allâ?• was a monthly magazine my father had started in 1985. The magazine published in English; a 1/8 demy, monthly, priced Rs.3/ an issue and the magazine had around 80 pages covering various academic topics ranging from Physical, biological and social sciences. Filled with few informative bits and tips, that could be useful to students and readers of all age groups.

Religions of the world were one of the series of articles that ran for several issues. One particular month it was a topic of the Muslim faith. Many local Muslim clerics and a few from Hyderabad â?? our capital city then, objected to the content and tone of the article. The summons and subsequent brief detention was the unexpected fallout of my fatherâ??s conscientious literary and academic pursuit.

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My father was asked to wait at the local police station, I remember, he sitting on a bench with his signature dress code â?? white shirt tucked into black trousers, and a blue tie and with a black shoe. Quite an odd sight, at a time in early 90â??s, and that too at a police station. Iâ??m frantically trying to contact some of my fatherâ??s influential channels, to wriggle him out of this predicament. Our school, Kennedy High School, was very popular, for which, my father was the founder principal and many police personnel enjoyed few concessional privileges for their kids in it. A constable who had his kids studying in the school suggested me â??why donâ??t you contact Mr.Das who is a good friend of the police commissioner.â?•

Dr. Das was then a faculty of the Department of Commerce, in the celebrated Andhra Loyola College. And I was an alumnus, and my Dad was a lecturer in the Department of Physics for a brief period during the 60sâ?? in the same college. Besides, I knew that we used to own a small patch of land just across his residence. So far, the background facts, looked hopeful, bearing in mind this data I, sweltering and tensed, rushed to meet him. Fortunately, he was at home, and with a sense of urgency spoke to the concerned officer and saw to it that my father was â??freedâ?? the same evening.

Four years later, I met Dr.Das again when he came to offer his condolences hearing about my father sudden death.

Itâ??s expected of anyone to fall in dearly for power, riches, and in females for beauty but Iâ??m charmed by Dr.Dasâ??s booming baritone voice. The specialty of his voice is that it starts in the chest and reaches his well-cultured vocal chords and then takes a silvery pitch as it glides over to your ears â?? and I swear; it leaves you in a captivating spell. Itâ??s a rare mix: the charm, the voice, and the punditry. There is something anodynic in his voice. It resonates with multiple verbal hues when his rich intellect modulates both in English and Telugu at its insightful best. I, perhaps, got fascinated and figured, â??this is what I want to go after and emulate â?? his â??full of lifeâ?? persona.â?•

For four years I have battled alone but, I couldnâ??t connect the dots, and at a loss; not knowing how to navigate the goings-on at school. Moreover, dealing with the publicâ??s the negative â??academically immatureâ?? notion that got circulated after my fatherâ??s absence; I found myself at the bottom of doubtable views about my credentials and competency to manage the show at the school. I, in the midst of this crisis, upon my request, Dr.Das entered my school as an academic consultant and later, into my professional life, initiating a transformative spell â?? a protective role after my father.

Not wasting much time after assuming his task as an academic mentor he had introduced one slogan, â??the seminarâ?? â?? a catchword that went down popularly, happily enough, among all my teachers including my wife, Mani.

After sitting for three long, absorbing days, along with my trusted group of staff, in his teaching and management seminars â?? several of them; I decided in a way â??let me model my teaching, the command over the language, the diction, and the personalityâ?• like him. From then on I carved out my teaching and communicating versatility truly imitating his manner and style.

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It was his Idea to design value and moral instruction classes for higher grade students and proceed to spend hours together to enthrall and motivate them. Proudly, quite frankly, two decades ago this was a progressive concept unheard of in other institutes. It would surprise me even today, when few former students, during reunions, gratefully, recollecting about the value-added classes and how much they have gained by such enlightened discourses that had etched upon in their formative years. His brainchild idea, drawing up to teach; character, and ethics, which has sanctified scores of students of our school!

Let me confess how my professional trail took a productive and evolved upswing after for more than twenty years of my close association with Dr.Das as a silent disciple and a hardcore admirer. Undoubtedly, such a psychological watershed moment, occurring in oneâ??s life, just by merely coming in touch with one person I can say; is a mystical gift one profits a lifetime!

He aided as a perfect mirror wherein I could look into and notice my shortcomings and areas I need to refine and get enriched. And thereby getting down working and picking up diligently, the know- how to build up to a level of satisfaction of my own. I developed my disciplined procedures, over the years, to learn the wisp of wisdom he would unveil in small doses whenever we would frequently meet. And, then getting back to my place to mull over, work out over, and build upon to assemble little steps of skill and language which I would help myself to climb to fruition in the following years. Precisely, this is how I honed my keen appetite to be a good teacher and confidence to stand up and reach out.

Over the years, our friendship has seen the best and worst of events in my roller-coaster crusade that had always been unkind. Like, my frequent hospitalizations, my wifeâ??s health, disputes among my brothers, my daughterâ??s marriage, selecting a bride for my son, negotiating the income tax headaches, bank issues, recommending the guests for my school functions, and much more. If there is a celebration in my house, he is the first one to see to its success and my happiness. My first call would be to him. Itâ??s like he plays the role of a central pivot allowing the wheel of my life to move forth with fewer bumps, better negotiations, smother run, all along marshaling with his presence and leading watchfully, with his timely cushioning and foresight, not to allow my going ,go off- balance.

During the days when Iâ??m struggling with the loss of my father and juggling with controlling the school affairs, it was Dr.Das who has introduced and later joined me as a member of the elite Rotary Club of Vijayawada. Intermingling with the well-read and highly accomplished group has opened up for me like good acquaintances and a charitable insight into micro-dynamics of the society we live. Rotary, has introduced me to a compassionate world of â??many willing hands to help someone, anyone, in kind, in deed, and in need.â?•

Whatever happened in my life, no matter the sort of assaults I had dealt with, the adventures I had sailed along, despite the deep wounds that pained me? Or the fineness and flair of the expertise Iâ??m granted with, the joyful luck Iâ??m favored. Iâ??m so glad and extremely gratified and humbled that I live in a world where there are good souls like Dr. Das and amazing friends willing to lend a helping hand and a shoulder. And I count all my blessings as the sweetest and the holiest. If you find a smile on my lips, calmness in my thoughts, relaxation in my stride, friendship in my behavior â?? it is because of all the remarkable and the big-hearted good Samaritans Iâ??m gifted with.

Category

1. Uncategorized

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