

MY FATHER THE TEACHER

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(My father is the most magnificent and feared man in my life. This essay is my tribute to him for all the important values, lessons he has taught me. And if Iâ??m enjoying a resourceful and decent way of life, Iâ??m indebted to him forever.)

Thirty years back, when I saw him breathe his last, and Iâ??m still to come to terms with my age, a young adult and the shrewd senses havenâ??t even fully formed. Then three decades later, with sixty staring in my face, trying to hide the salt and pepper beard and quite relishing the smiles of three grandchildren, magically, Iâ??m caught up in one eluding the fact that hugely mystified me. However unshakable, my sixty-year-old personality appears to stand tall; I suspect a part of my fatherâ??s formidable apparition whirring deep inside me. Itâ??s alive! His booming, cautioning and comforting tone, Iâ??m startled at his everyday briefings as if he had collared my neck and holding the reins. Sometimes I hear the voice as if emanating from a deep well, â??hey donâ??t keep worrying, everything turns out all right.â?? That very zesty vision restores hope and confidence.

My fancy imagination comes up with scenes something the same as holding a cane twisting to explain the truth. Itâ??s up to me to decide what is right and wrong and spin a personality that attracts nice thoughts and further stirs enough fear if I move away from those binding virtues. All the time, I hear his nagging voice running all over me.

I wondered, just in case, my father had it everything cautiously fused and infused into my blood, the rightly drawn-out selection of habits, mindset, foresight, teaching

practices, the loyalty and love toward all right and fair. And now, I sit up with unrealistic thoughts that he is keen to find out if Iâ??m confirming his line of trustworthiness.

When his memories flood in, it gives me a feeling, in whichever way I actuate myself, a figment of my fatherâ??s unseen care, protection, and guidance follow, his hand over my shoulder moralizing, â??never get cowered by issues tough and rough.â?? I shudder to remember his high-pitched voice, waving his finger at me, anger spread all over the face when he had an inkling I might jump beyond the reputable boundaries when Iâ??m a teenaged soul hungrily seeking the freedom to fly away.

In the years that followed, I could never bury the raw edges of the turbulent past. My fatherâ??s towering toughness hauled at when I was a carefree young adult. Iâ??m not sure of myself If I ever could wipe clean the remnants of those blistering insults which remain yoked and buried hurtfully in my chest when I recall the situation when Iâ??m rebelliously unruly â?? those fanatical infantile days.

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But as persistent as it could become, the whole of his fascinating psyche has been intensely a part of my being. Three decades later, I feel Iâ??m still hooked to his directions, nibbling the seeds of forbearance he had sprinkled during my formative years. His commands still ring in my ears like temple bells calling out for corrective steps, stern warnings, and persuasive whispers. In doing so, now Iâ??m pragmatic enough to heed his words bringing in healing, strength, and powerful inspiration. There is not a day I would ever escape hearing his unmistakable hints of foretelling; finally, I sleep with an impression, â??He had got the headphones riveted over my ears; for good.â?? can I ever delete myself from him?

As I grew older, I evolved in all sincerity spanning three decades in the absence of my father. I have had enough at the threshold of worries and doubts. Itâ??s about time, and I said to myself to recalibrate what I want to do and how I want to do â?? the beginning of something I ought to become â?? alive, fit, active, and creative like my father. A chip of him I strove to become who had survived for full fifty-six years bouncing until the last lesson he had taught in the school he created.

A saying goes like this: the people who drive us crazy, who are tough, from whose guarded grip we want to run away; they teach us the most and influence us the most â?? that is my father. He never brought me up sweetly, but I had a receptive mind during the whole of my formative years, and hence, I ended up being a better person. I owe it to him, for what Iâ??m today because of his little bouts of strictness, and bursts of sternness.

When I go back and think about my upbringing, itâ??s a bountiful realization that my father left a blazing trail of principles, values to follow; perhaps in his wake even today, it dug deep instructive influence consciously and subconsciously into my being. When I put my feelings about him in perspective, the superior walk of resourceful ability, I see in for myself which I wish to behold for the rest of the days. I have become a hard, humble working spirit who profited from his eternal glow lavishing from the portrait that towers in my study.

My father left behind a few invisible postulates, which I stuck to them like a twig in flooded waters, like a balm in case of pain thriving to live on them as if it were oxygen. Without them, I feel it isnâ??t living at all. If Iâ??m living better, feeling better because the path seems strewn with those insightful impressions. I believe they shine a dependable light for my future vicissitudes.

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A huge container of books, magazines followed him in 1968 when he returned to his native town in India after a five-year stint in the USA for his post-doctoral research at North Carolina University. I remember we stacked them in whichever place was available on the tables, benches, window sills, in our ancestral home. Most of them were studies in Physics, Mathematics, and Chemistry, the subjects he loved the most.

Henceforth, I got introduced, serendipitously, into his world of books and the habit of reading. Itâ??s an enduring fact that in my way of living, books played a much bigger role than friends and blood relations put together. When Iâ??m through bad times, they have dispelled the silence and chimed in a little music, and in dark moods, they flashed in a warm light. Reading has opened up an insight â?? words have the power to change us. When I leaped into the pages, it felt like poise to eyes, a prayer to console, and a charm to shatter many of my myths. The urge caught on me at an early age I took to heart that books were a wholesome appetite for strength, esteem, and peace. However, much I have valued my attachment to the habit of reading, indebtedly, it went to frame a major chunk of my fatherâ??s legacy locked in me.

Cleanliness and dignity were high on my fatherâ??s agenda both at home and along the corridors, classrooms, and play area, too, even public places he was obsessively inflexible in sprucing the vicinities squeaky-clean. He made sure before he left home, we brushed all the rooms laid in black tiles shining clean; we could see our reflections on all floors buffed and glassy. And his gospel embraced the table manners and merry moods while at dining. He extended his flair about dressing too, â??thereâ??s a dignity to dress your age, and we have to dress to impress ourselvesâ?? the way we dress up and step outside speaks how responsible and respectful we are. He walked the talk, hygiene and tidiness was his principle and personality no matter the mood or

hour of the day everyone walked behind him in healthy environs at our school.

Although having attained a level of aptitude to learn and enjoy the benefits of some soft skills, I couldnâ??t get away from the floundering roller-coaster ride of tossing and troubles. Been wary of my fatherâ??s magical protection gone long back and the void to cope, it required to squeeze out every drop of courage to survive. I fought the thorny battles of responsibility alone. I was vulnerable, naÃ¯ve, untrained when I accepted the control of the school and its administrative strings.

Over the years, I must confess I have tasted the sandwich of anguish, luck, and sadness in equal measures, but eventually, I saw glory blessing in many inexplicable ways. Perhaps the incentive I nurtured could be the fortunate seeds of ambition to become a better teacher, a better leader, a better person after having adopted the humility as a template a sure survival blueprint laid out by my father. I treasure it as itâ??s indelibly made up of foresight, an emotional logic. I became sensible; my credibility went up that brought in an acceptable change-over. It was dramatic and saw me fresh, active and growing in the course of my apprenticed tenure.

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My fatherâ??s beliefs and the way I clung to them for over three decades never betrayed my indomitable trust that it would always help swim across oceans of distress, difficulty, and disdain and emerged as a proud son of my father, and proud of myself too in all eventualities. Even though, fatefully, the going couldnâ??t become as hard as the crushing sadness of my wifeâ??s recent death. However, as luck laughs upon dogged traits, every day, I embark on a new journey, a smile stretched over my face and stuck on to my optimism. Here were the reasons for my blissful days; they always begin with new hope, new strength, and new ambitions all over again.

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