

Never give up - difficulties raise will

Family



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How has your family and/or community helped shape your development?

Please include information about where you grew up, and perhaps a highlight or special memory of your youth.

My father is a role model in my village. His story is legendary and has inspired the people of my village to overcome seemingly impossible obstacles. I am fortunate to have him as my father and friend, and to receive his love and guidance that I am sure will continue to help me in times of distress throughout my life.

My father was born into a poor family. His father died when he was just 8 years old leaving him to take care of his mother and sister. Circumstances forced him to work at a tender age to make both ends meet. He told me how he had to beg to feed his family in a severe famine that lasted months. He worked as a laborer and farmer while attending evening school. With little education to speak of, he joined the air force and from the lowest level he rose through the ranks to become a captain. After serving the force for 23 years, when he retired at Forty, he had completed not one but two bachelor degrees, one in law and the other in management. Then he joined the local court where he became a successful lawyer and eventually was appointed the president of the court.

I was an average student in junior school and, perhaps in the hope of improving my studies, my father enrolled me in the best high school in town. Then something happened that would change my life forever. I had just given my first exam and was waiting for the results. Then, my teacher called me to her chamber and announced that I had failed because of cheating in the exam. I understood that somebody had wrongly reported my name to
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her. Within minutes the news spread through the whole school like wild fire. Everyone was looking at me, some laughing and pointing, some sympathetic and sad. I felt humiliated, and was afraid of facing my father. I was sure that he would beat me to death for bringing disrepute to him and the family name.

By the time I reached home, father had got the news. But, completely different from what I expected, he asked me calmly “ Did you cheat in the test?” I shook my head and he just came over and hugged me. “ Then there is nothing to worry about” he said adding “ this is the opportunity that god has given you, you got to show them all your true mettle, you have to surprise them with your determination. Go for it, my boy”. I instantly got the message and was transformed.

I was on a mission from then on, reading voraciously at the local library and burning every single day of that term, sacrificing all entertainments, I studied and when the final examinations came around, I was prepared for the showdown. I achieved the top scholarship on all the 3 criteria: No. 1 in class, top 5 in the whole grade and the student who improved 20+ positions in one stroke. The smile on my father’s face when I told him the good news, I shall never forget in my life.

Later, I went through several occasions where my father’s words of inspiration gave me the strength to go on. My first presentation as a SAP consultant was such an occasion. It went so horribly wrong, that I have no idea how I mumbled my apologies to the client and asked for another appointment after a week. I was clearly not ready for the presentation. My father’s philosophy of using an adversity as an opportunity to find the resources within you that you never knew existed, came back to me and

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repossessed my life for a week. Hours and hours of research and consultation later, I took the stage once more and this time I was ready with the answers to the client's problems.

Rebounding from a setback is not easy. My father's life itself is lesson that tells me to persist even when the odds are against me. Because I understand that failures teach me much more than victories do. What matters is not my failure; it is my response to failure.

From a farmer to a captain, then a president of the local court, my father's life taught me lessons that enabled me to take on the challenges that life threw at me from time to time. His dogged adherence to his principles and values gave me guidance at critical junctures in my life.

As a future entrepreneur, I really understand that failure and frustration will knock me off the horse again and again, but to realize my dream I only need to get back on the saddle one more time.