

Think negative
experiences



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

As a child, Josh Mahayana grew up in a poor family (and having total of 8 billings) all the way in Gambling, Subway and came face-to-face with poverty at a very young age. He began to realize this while as he was walking everyday seeing his neighbors watch televisions and listening to the radio, thinking to himself why his family did not do the same things other people did. But this did not hinder him from doing what a normal child should do. " Maharani nag Kim. Insist OK an gung Hindi aka mage-oral at massaging, wall tale Kong page-as an abashing nag Kinshasa OK. , he proclaimed. In fact, growing up, his mindset was focused on graduating, and he did, despite he 10-kilometer walk that took him at least 2 hours everyday to go to school. It became a constant reminder to him to hold on to his dreams and education. In elementary, he only put his school supplies in a plastic bag. He would go around knocking on different sari-sari stores everyday asking for a new plastic bag because his plastic bag would rip off due to his pencils. He even mentioned that there were times that he did not even get the chance to eat nor was given allowance.

He thought it was a blessing for him to be able to listen in his classes and walk going to school despite the lack of food in his yester. He was indeed very determined to learn and to finish his studies as his parents would always tell him that they never got the opportunity to study like he did. He finally graduated, even as the Valedictorian of his batch. It was a great feeling for him and his parents to be able to graduate, even as Valedictorian, despite the status of their family. But then, going to college was quite a struggle for him.

Having a total of 8 siblings, it is very common in the Filipino culture to have the oldest to be sent to college first before the others. But then again, Josh found a way to send himself to college. In that summer, he worked in a mining place and used his salary to travel to Swamis City. It was a blessing for him to graduate as Valedictorian, but even more of a blessing to be offered a scholarship in Misamis University and did not have to pay for his tuition. He had dreams of becoming a lawyer and also an executive in a building in Magmata. Taking chances and exploring possibilities, after graduating, he traveled to Manila at 19 years old.

A generous individual gave him 10,000 pesos from his college that believed he deserved the life he dreamt of living; which was to help others, especially his family. He then rented a small place in Cuba, having only one set of old business attire, looking for a job. He even experienced being holdup, having taken his wallet and cellophane. Luckily enough, he was ranked 3rd from all the applicants that applied to the job that he did. He knew that he did not pass all the qualities that the job was searching for but this did not hinder him from taking a chance.

He studied law and after happily and thankful working for that company for 3 years, he traveled to the United States. He knew he had to work hard because his siblings and family were not earning enough to supply what they needed and his mom sick as well. 250,000 pesos were lent to him to have the opportunity to travel to the U. S. He worked, as a cleaner for 3 years, cleaning 15 rooms a day, and a room was limited to be cleaned in a period of 30 minutes. Paying a visit to the Philippines after 3 years, he did not know that one simple thing would change his life plans.

He saw a little boy walking in the rice field of his province, and it reminded him of what he was before. He was once that kid. That encounter made him realize that it was a sign from God. " I was once that kid. My life story is not just about a kid overcoming poverty but I realized that the story of my life was about the concept and mindset of poverty in the Philippines. The problem about poverty in our country is not poverty itself, but the mindset that it cannot be changed. And if I saw that change in education and effort in myself, it is possible to happen to other poor children in this country. He flew back to the U. S and eventually sold all the things that he did not usually use. He also passed by Vietnam because he was interested on the manufacturing. He met a woman that helped him pursue the business that he wanted to put up in the near future. The woman was generous enough to help him and lent him money from the company. Bringing home a total of 200 bags back home to the Philippines and sold it only in a period of 2 weeks. According to him, a bag is very symbolic. It stands for education. And this is how Bag was formed.

Not only Bag by the object itself but also by the acronym Be A Giver. Instead of having a buy 1, take 1 promo, instead was a buy 1 , give 1 promo. Each bag you buy, a bag is given to the needy. It is a project that is very close to his heart because he claimed that if he wanted to reuse something, he wanted it to also be relevant to him and the bag was the perfect representation of it. " I think it is amazing that while a Bag giver uses his bag every day, he knows that a kid somewhere in the Philippines carries a bag, too, that he gave, trying to accomplish his dreams.

In the same way, that while a kid strives every day to go to school in pursuit of education and his dreams, he knows that somebody out there actually

cared and thought about him. " Josh claims, " Every time I hand over a bag to a kid now, I am actually handing over a bag to myself. I want them to feel the inspiration and encouragement felt when a distant relative gave me a bag when was in Grade 4. The simple act of giving propelled me to dream the same kind of dreams my classmate had, or even bigger. He eventually stopped manufacturing in Vietnam and was inspired by a public official to start manufacturing here due to the fact that it would be proudly made in the Philippines, would create local jobs and have an easier quality tracking. The generous individual that lent him 10, 000 pesos now works hand in hand with Josh and is an operations manager at Bag. She claims that it is an amazing feeling to not only work because of needing a job but the Overwhelming feeling of giving to those who are in need each time someone purchases one bag.

As of 2014, there are about 3, 000 bags that have been made by this company in the Philippines. They give out bags to different chosen public schools. This serves as a motivation for them that in spite of their hard status in life, they have that little hope to hold on to. The most heart-warming part of the interview was seeing how Josh's project made an impact to the children in need as they thanked him for the bag and owe it motivates them to be exactly like him. And yet again another project called The Yellow Boat of Hope (HOB) movement led by Dry.

Anton Limit as Josh's giving partner. This project started from the discovery of seeing children in Gambling City literally swimming their way to school. It was a very heartbreaking fact for them to know that some kids still do not have an easy access to education. HOB provides boats for children in order

for him to go to school and not having to swim anymore. Now, they expanded their projects to include livelihood for the parents as well as the building of lassosers, dormitories and even bridges. " What I am doing right now is a product of what people did for me. FL am able to give, it is because I had been given. It is the right thing to do. " Josh even said that he does not need to be bayed for what he does, because the overwhelming feeling of seeing kids happy is enough for him. Remember my grandmother once telling me that should always be humble. In whatever I do, humility is a virtue should always retain. Should always be generous and always be kind, for whatever I give, will be given back to me. Not always by material objects, but by kindness and generosity as well. I've stood by that saying for almost how many years now.

My grandmother will always be someone I will look up to because she has gone through many challenges to be who she is now. She may not always have it all together in her career, but she is always happy full of content. Not only she is happy, she shares that happiness to the family and to others. She is the best grandmother anybody could possibly have and I am blessed that she is mine. She is beautiful, she is smart and she is generous. She started off just like Josh, in a poor state. With 7 siblings, and her as an only girl.

Education will always be a priority in our family because my grandparents know how important education is in one's life. My grandmother worked hard to reach her dreams. She married my grandfather and became successful in life. Not only successful but, happily successful. She never forgot where she came from and now helps also the students in need for an education by giving them jobs. I remember one of the working students sending her a text

message saying " one day, I will give you anything you want just to repay you for your kindness" and my grandmother replied with finishing your education will be enough".

She will tell that to my siblings and me as well. She still has dreams on putting up a school and a home for children in need. She will always inspire me in whatever I do. I really do believe that we should never be selfish with what we have. And I also believe that success will always depend on you, yourself. The success of Bag would have never been possible if Josh decided to be one of those kids that just stayed at home and did not push himself to study. Think that if everyone has a mindset like him, poverty would lessen in this country. Because what you dwell on is whatnot become.

How you see things will always affect the things that you do and the decisions you make. Nowadays, I think it is so hard to stumble upon humble people like Josh. People usually do not realize the fact that they are very much blessed. Josh was blessed with generous people to help him achieve success along the way. Think negative experiences in your life can determine what kind of a person you are: that is if you are a person to give up or the person that stands back up and try again. Content. This is what this interview is also trying to point out. Contentment.