

Life's lessons

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If victory is certain, even a coward can fight. But the really brave are the ones who dare to fight if they know that their defeat is certain.

I'd like to narrate an incident which for me emphasised the truth of the above statement.

I once had to travel from Bangalore to Baroda. Since I did not get a direct ticket, I bought a ticket from Bangalore to Mumbai and then from Mumbai to Baroda. On a Sunday, at 8:00 p.m, I boarded the Udyan Express to Mumbai from Bangalore. After a comfortable 24-hour journey I got off at Dadar on Monday. I didn't continue up to Mumbai because I knew that my next train from Mumbai to Baroda stopped at Dadar and that I could board the train from Dadar. I waited from 8:00 p.m to 11:00 p.m. Around 11:10 p.m. some time before my train was due to arrive I checked with the railway authorities on which platform the train would arrive. The clerk's reply struck me like thunderbolt. The train I intended to board at Dadar did not stop at Dadar at all! This train I was supposed to be on would leave Mumbai at 11:20 pm. It would have been next to impossible for me to reach Mumbai Central in 10 minutes even if I took a taxi, because despite the hour the flow of traffic was heavy.

For a moment I did not know what to do? But I decided not to give up because 10 minutes can make a lot of difference in one's life. I knew that most trains that passed through Maharashtra had a halt in Borivili. Therefore, I decided to travel forward to Borivili instead of trying to get back to Mumbai. I got into a local train

without any knowledge of its destination. From a fellow passenger I came to know that the train would not pass from Borivili. I had to get off at Bandra Terminus. The time by now was 11:20 p.m. My train would have departed from Mumbai. I rushed to the station master to find out whether the Baroda Express had a halt at Bandra. To my dismay he said no and he asked me to wait for a local train to Borivili which was to arrive in five minutes. But I couldn't waste time waiting as the local train and the Baroda Express were heading in the same direction and I knew the Express would surely overtake the local train. Immediately, I hired a taxi to Borivili. I asked the driver to drive really fast. In Mumbai's heavy traffic, the driver drove as fast as he could and I reached Borivili by 12:00 midnight. Just as I was entering the

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to station I heard the announcement that the Baroda Express was to arrive in a few minutes. I heaved a sigh of relief. I reached Baroda safely early in the morning at 6:00am on Tuesday.

This experience in my life taught me many valuable things.

1. Never take things for granted. Check twice before you arrive at a decision.
2. You are never a loser until you quit trying.
3. Mistakes are painful when they happen. But years later a collection of mistakes called experience leads us to success.

Life's lessons do not have a curriculum; there are no textbooks available to prepare and the examination schedule is not declared in advance. One has to learn a lot in one's life through one's own experiences and from the experiences of others.

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Failure is the stepping stone