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Everlasting Memories of University Days

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Abstract

The most enjoyable, lovable, memorable, and fanciful phases of our life with lots of nostalgic and immortal memories are childhood and college / university life. And yes, university period has been the best phase of my life. Fond memories of the days spent at Gulbarga University evoke visual images of people, places and time spent on the campus. If I stop and close my eyes, I can see it all so clearly and feel as if those days were not very long ago.

It is here that I met my most influential and life-changing role models who not only chiselled and shaped my life, but continue to inspire me even to this day. It was my good fortune that I found such worthy role models among my Professors. Each one of them inspired and motivated not only me but also all the students under them.

University life is perhaps the only phase in life when you will be able to be yourself, trying out entirely new things, finding your passion, and exploring life without any tension at all. My days at the University were a challenge and enlightening experience for me. It facilitated my personal growth and development and provided me with life-long attributes. I feel that I am a kind of a detached soul with a practical outlook towards life. But still I miss people from my past - Places... time... memories... tears and smiles.... I can relate to everything I left behind....

Keywords: Nostalgic, Memorable, Influential, Exploring life, University days

Introduction

According to me, two abstract things which, can never be swapped with any precious stone or any huge amount of money in this world are childhood and college / university life. They are the most enjoyable, lovable, memorable, and fanciful phases of our life with lots of nostalgic and immortal memories. And yes, university period has been the best phase of my life.

The main purpose of going to university is to learn, and gain that all important degree. Having said that, I can't find words enough to describe the 'life experience' that university is all about. Besides the academic stuff, there is so much more that we learn which helps mould our thoughts, views, opinions and behavior and stands us in good stead all through our lives.

“My experience at Gulbarga University was one that showed me that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

Fond memories of the days spent at Gulbarga University evoke visual images of people, places and time spent on the campus. If I stop and close my eyes, I can see it all so clearly and feel as if those days were not very long ago.

I had got married into a very conservative family, soon after completing my graduation. They were very much against the idea of their daughter-in-law continuing with her education as they felt there was no need for it. But, my father being a defense personnel and more than that, a self-made man, believed that it was necessary that I complete my education and become economically independent. He had insisted that if I clear the PG entrance tests and get a seat, he would fund my education. I managed to get first and fourth place in the Psychology and English Literature entrance exams respectively. With a lot of submissions and requests, I finally got the nod to go ahead with my education. Keeping in view the immediate job opportunities available and my own literary inclinations, I decided to enroll

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As a married student I was nervous that I was not going to fit in right away, but that was not the case. From the moment I stepped foot on the Gulbarga university campus, I knew I had made the right decision. It is a place where the students are welcoming and the professors take the time to get to know their students. Having these special connections with your professors makes the college experience very enjoyable, as they help you to discover talents you never knew you had.

I was indeed very lucky to have been a part of the English department at Gulbarga University at a time when it was at its zenith, with a full-fledged, learned staff and thriving with various activities. A stalwart of English literature in India like Dr. Balram Gupta, headed the Department. I was introduced to a wide array of sub-fields of literature such as Classics, Poetry, Prose, Drama, Fiction, Regional Literature (Translations), Common-wealth Literature, American Literature, Criticism and so on. We went through the whole process of attending lectures, having group discussions and seminars, visiting the library and fruitful interactions with the staff members.

Along with these academic activities, in the two years of the MA course, I met many people, worked and enjoyed with everybody I came across and most importantly, I discovered a different me. In the second year of the course, Dr. Ujwala Hiremath took charge as the Chairman of the department. An English Association was established to involve the students in different literary activities and I was privileged enough to be selected as the Secretary of the association. I got an opportunity to work in close contact with the staff members and have hands-on experience of the various facets of organizing and arranging different events. I improved considerably in terms of public speaking, anchoring, organizing and so on, as a wide range of activities were undertaken under the aegis of the English Association. There were various events which were organized and clubs inaugurated. The Translation of the Vachanas and the Three-day National Seminar on Prose Writing organized by the Department were the main highpoints of my stay in the University.

I had once read somewhere that, "When the student is ready, the teacher appears." — And it seemed to be so true for me. It is here that I met my most influential and life-changing role models who not only chiselled and shaped my life, but continue to inspire me even to this day. A role model is a person who inspires and encourages us to strive for greatness, live to our fullest potential and see the best in ourselves. A role model is someone we admire and someone we aspire to be like. We learn through them, through their commitment to excellence and through their ability to make us realize our own personal growth. We look to them for advice and guidance. It was my good fortune that I found such worthy role models among my Professors. Each one of them inspired and motivated not only me but also all the students under them.

Dr. Ujwala Hiremath, is one of the most life-changing personalities I met who had a powerful impact on my personality. In spite of being good at studies, going against the family wishes, had taken its toll on me. I was at a stage of my life when I was very unsure about my abilities and had a low self-esteem. It was at this point that she took me under her wings and brought me out of my shell. She played a pivotal role in shaping me into the strong,

confident and independent woman that I am today. Having a professor like Prof. Ujwala Hiremath who truly cares about her students has helped me to realize how important it will be for me to care about my future students and help them realize and pursue the talents they have.

I had so many favorite professors. The one that stands out the most is Prof. V.R.Badigere, who taught us Prose writings and Fiction. He had a humorous way of teaching which captured my interest in literature so much so that, I still collect and read the classics to this very day. He was a wonderfully kind and eminently pragmatic scholar. His approach was to use anecdotes, humour and encouragement. His energy is contagious. He inspires his students to strive for excellence. His interest in the material is profound as well as his desire to pass on the knowledge he holds.

Prof. Badgere mixes lecture with discussion to convey a comprehensive picture of whatever topic we are discussing. His knowledge is comprehensive - but the thing he's best at is showing both sides of an argument. You may come to his class with one view of something - your mind made up - but by the time you leave, you may have switched sides or at the very least considered the other side, just from the completeness of his explanations.

Though I was very intimidated by Prof. Badgere during those days in the university, I got a God-sent opportunity to get to know him better when I registered for my Ph.D under his guideship, after a gap of nearly 17 years of completion of my M.A course. He has been supportive in everything I have done. He has always been there when I needed help on my thesis. He has guided me through every step of research from creating a research idea to developing it into a thesis and next into a publishable book. He is always available to help and discuss ideas, and has a breadth of knowledge and expertise that is an invaluable resource to students. I am so glad that I have had the opportunity to work with such an incredible professor.

The Professors of the English Department of Gulbarga University during the academic years 1993-95 helped me shape my personality. I now feel I am a global citizen. The ability to talk to people from all over the world made me realise the importance of communication, an open mind, and respect. They made me feel confident to take on future challenges, open to engaging in new experiences and ideas, and inspired me to become educated and socially conscious citizen of the world.

My experience at Gulbarga University was one of learning, not only theories and other such things, but of human interaction and ways of life. It was amazing how so many persons from differing backgrounds and cultures and ages can come together to form a community of harmony and learning. University life is perhaps the only phase in life when you will be able to be yourself, trying out entirely new things, finding your passion, and exploring life without any tension at all. You will be having the best time of your life along with your best friends who will be just like your family.

It was a great experience being there. I learnt many things in the two years that I spent there. Now when I look back I feel the changes. I met many who contributed to my life in one or the other way. I was encouraged, appreciated, criticized and discouraged time to time. But it always added towards my learning and helped me to learn and become better with every step. It is here in the university that you

learn about maturity and how to deal with complicated situations. I also learnt very good problem handling skills and stress management. Probably the biggest learning experience of them all is learning about you. Being at university teaches you so much about who you are as an individual. Starting at 19 and leaving at 21, I have grown so much as a person, as have many others. University life pushes your limits. You grow in confidence, learn to deal with stress and find your independence alongside making life-long memories. This is a great feeling but unfortunately there comes a day when you have to leave and venture out into the world.

The saying is true, university is a life experience, but remembering to balance out the university lifestyle while keeping your head focussed on that degree qualification is essential for a successful journey through your university days. If you can maintain the right balance, you'll certainly be graduating with plenty of smiles, a few tears, and some amazing years to look back on.

My days at the University were a challenge and enlightening experience for me. It facilitated my personal growth and development and provided me with life-long attributes. I feel that I am a kind of a detached soul with a practical outlook towards life. But still I miss people from my past - Places... time... memories... tears and smiles.... I can relate to everything I left behind.... How time changes and how life keeps on moving without a pause. People come, people go. We laugh, we cry. Some really low moments and some really high. Life, however, will move on. Life is so beautiful in its own way.