

My Profile

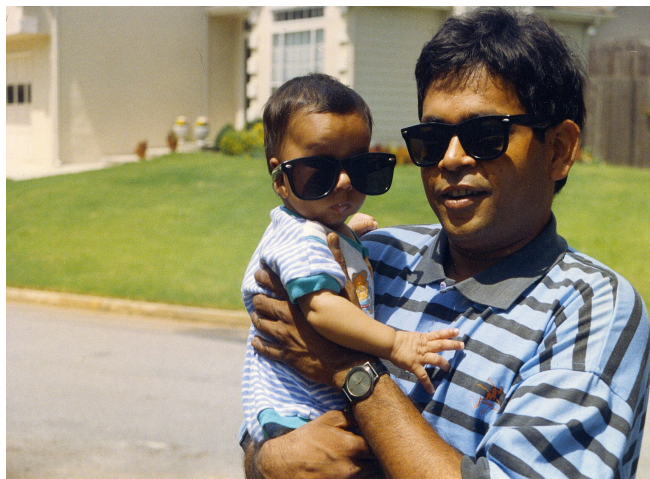
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*Keep your thoughts positive, because your thoughts become your words.
Keep your words positive, because your words become your behavior.
Keep your behavior positive, because your behavior become your habits.
Keep your habits positive, because your habits become your values.
Keep your values positive, because your values become your destiny.*

”

- Mahatma Gandhi

As I write this, I sit at my small desk in my small dorm, surrounded by the big campus of The University of Georgia. In August of 2011, I did not simply move to college, I stepped into an entirely new world. The transition has been rather unique for me. I am a young adult whose story is one of small schools, loving parents, and a tight group of childhood friends who might as well be siblings. The crossover from a small, Atlanta, private school and my comfortable lifestyle in the little city of Decatur, Georgia, to a large college campus, might as well have been a move to a new country. To make things harder, I lost my father, my role model, and my best friend in the summer of 2011. The loss of my father's frequent talks and the sudden absence of his daily smiles translated to a big loss of personal support in my life. I had to be strong for my mother, the rest of my family, and most of all, myself. This drastic transition in my life, happened to occur soon before my move to college.



In life, however, it seems as if these big changes are inevitable. In order to grow and develop, we must learn to adapt to these changes, and most importantly, maintain a sense of hope and motivation.

I unpacked, introduced myself to my new quiet roommate, and said goodbye to my wonderful mom as she drove back to the empty home that I left behind. The goodbye felt especially sad without my father there to be by mother's side. I remember going back up to my new dorm room, nine stories above the ground, and sitting down at my desk to see a photo of my smiling dad. I then remembered how he and I would give each other a (thumbs up) every time he dropped me off at school. He was a man who taught me to make the best out of life and to view all struggles as opportunities to learn and grow. Our tradition of giving each other a (thumbs up) was my reminder to maintain optimism.

The new world of college has come with a new lifestyle, new friends, and a growing feeling of independence and responsibility. By remembering what my father taught me, he continues to give me the strength to stay positive, work hard, and live on without him.