



My Learnings

BTech to PhD years

Sridhar Iyer

Leisure LxI Series

EdTech @ IIT Bombay



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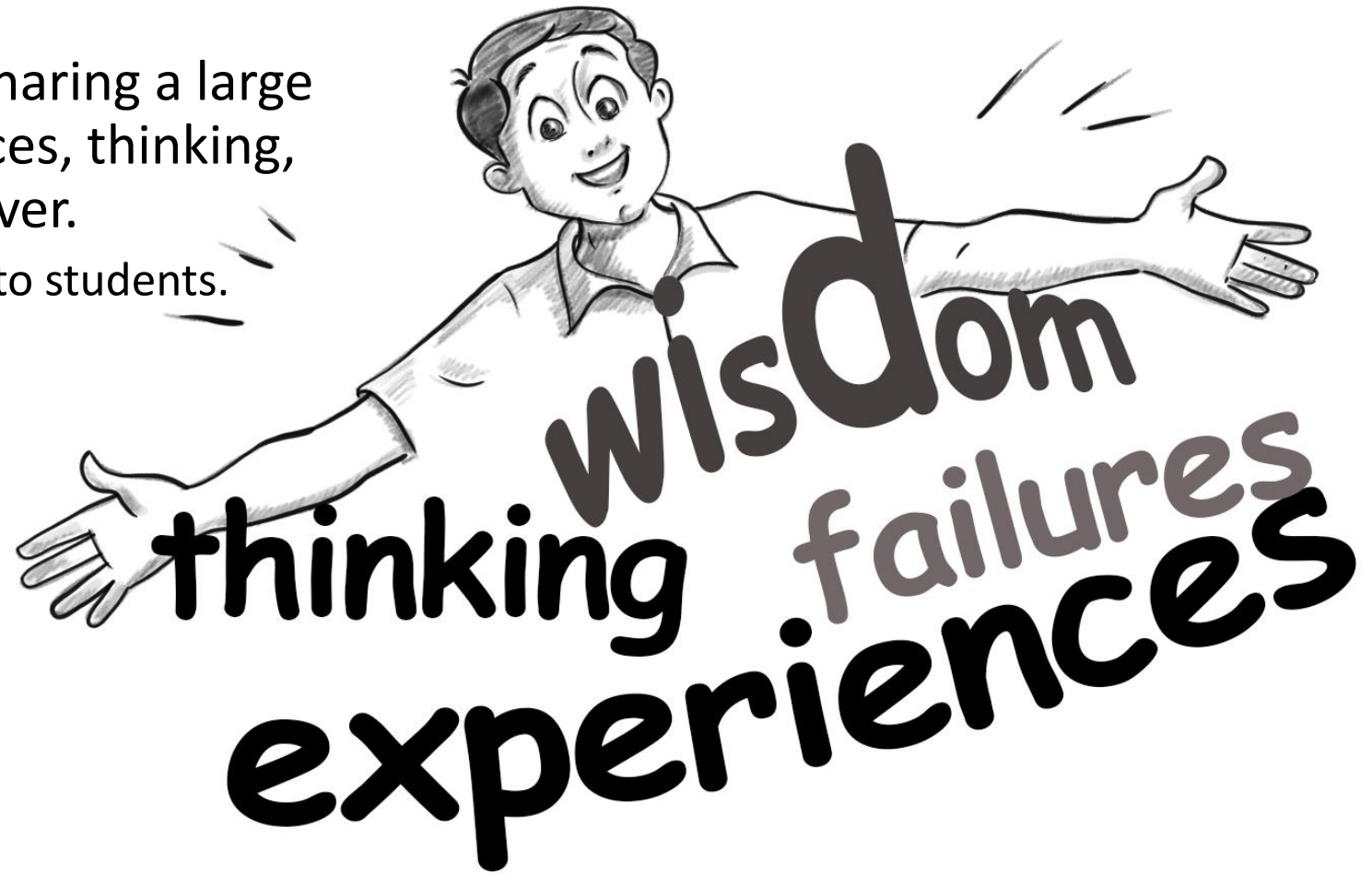
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For more details, see [slides at end](#) of this presentation.

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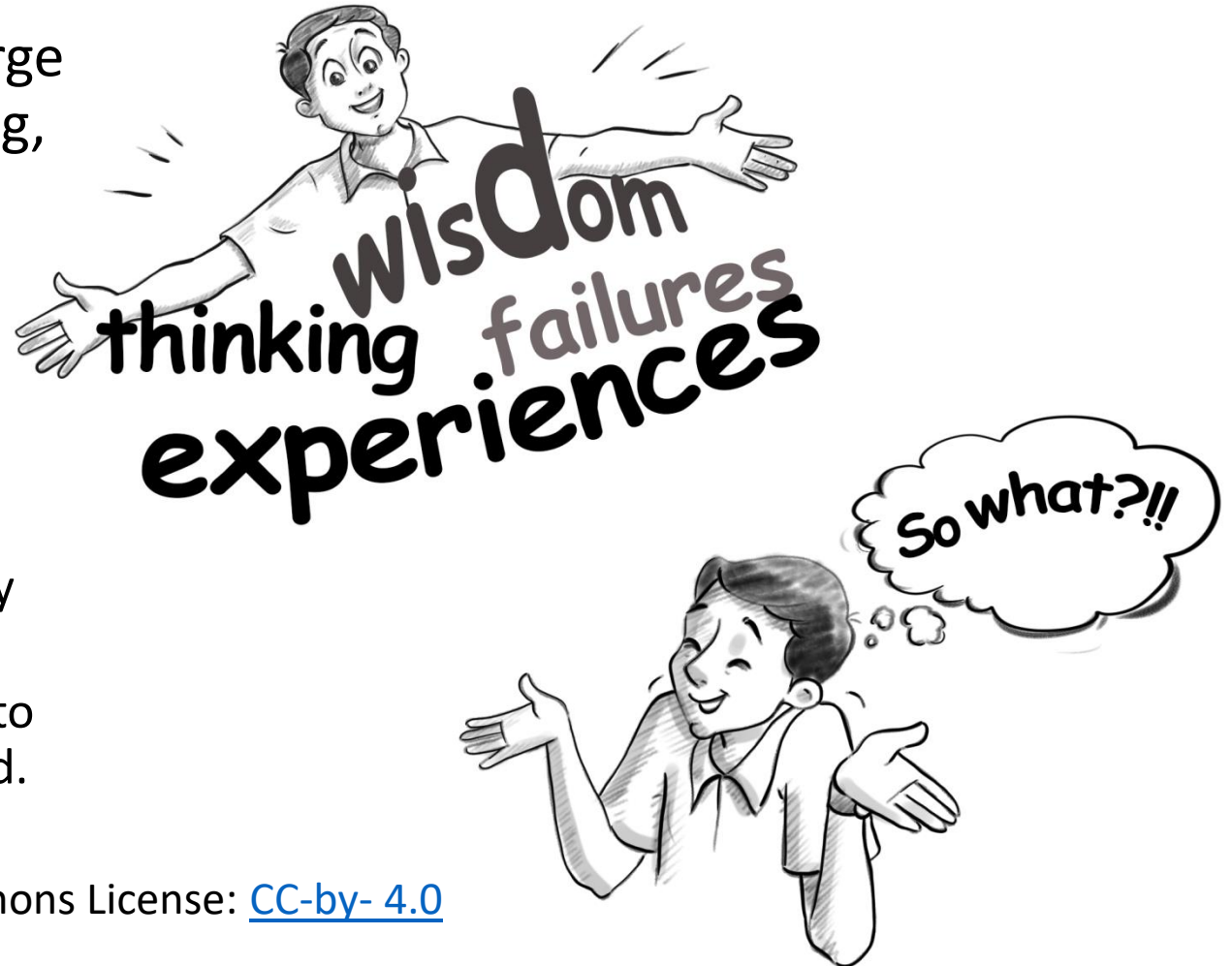
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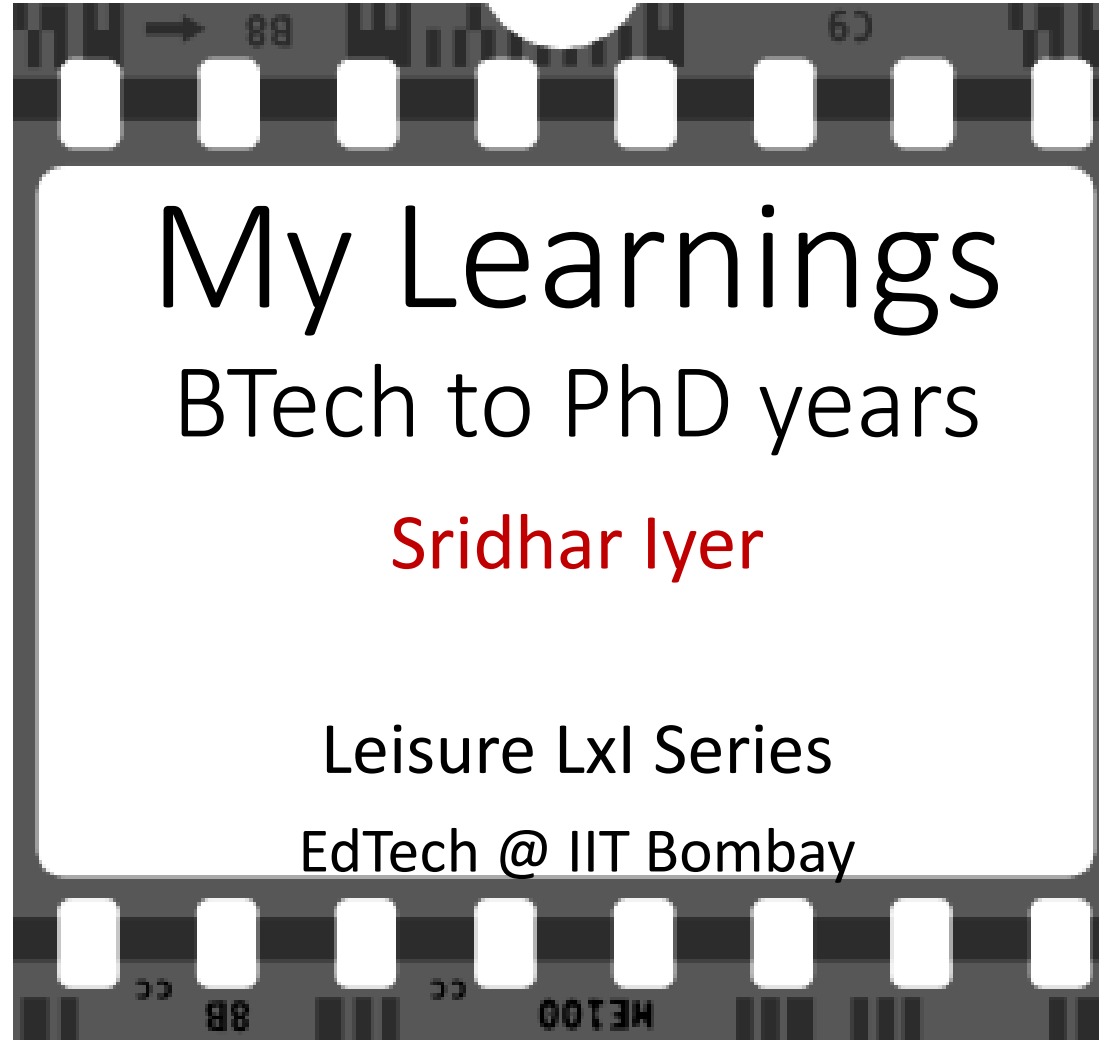
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Other Leisure LxIs need not do the same.

Moving On to today's topic



Target audience –

Students – UG to PhD.

Adults - 18 – 30 years.

If younger, PG advised.

If older, draw parallels
with your own journey.

Preamble

Preamble

- I am 50 years old → Approx 26 million minutes.



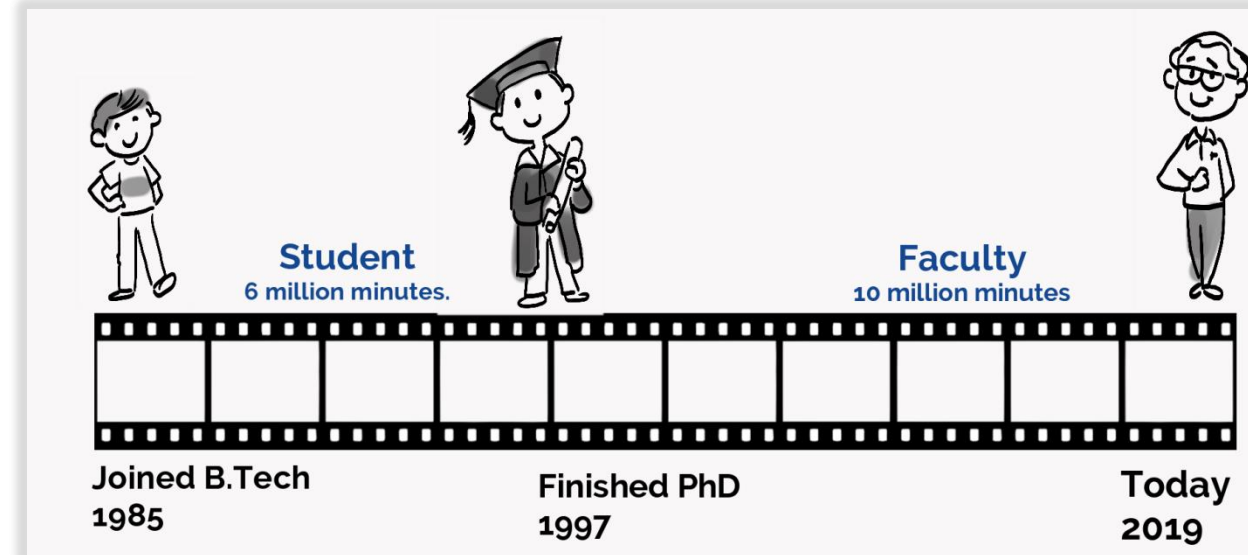
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- Compression algorithm options:
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- This Leisure LxI – **20’s lens.**



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- This Leisure LxI – **20s lens**.



Non-goals of this story

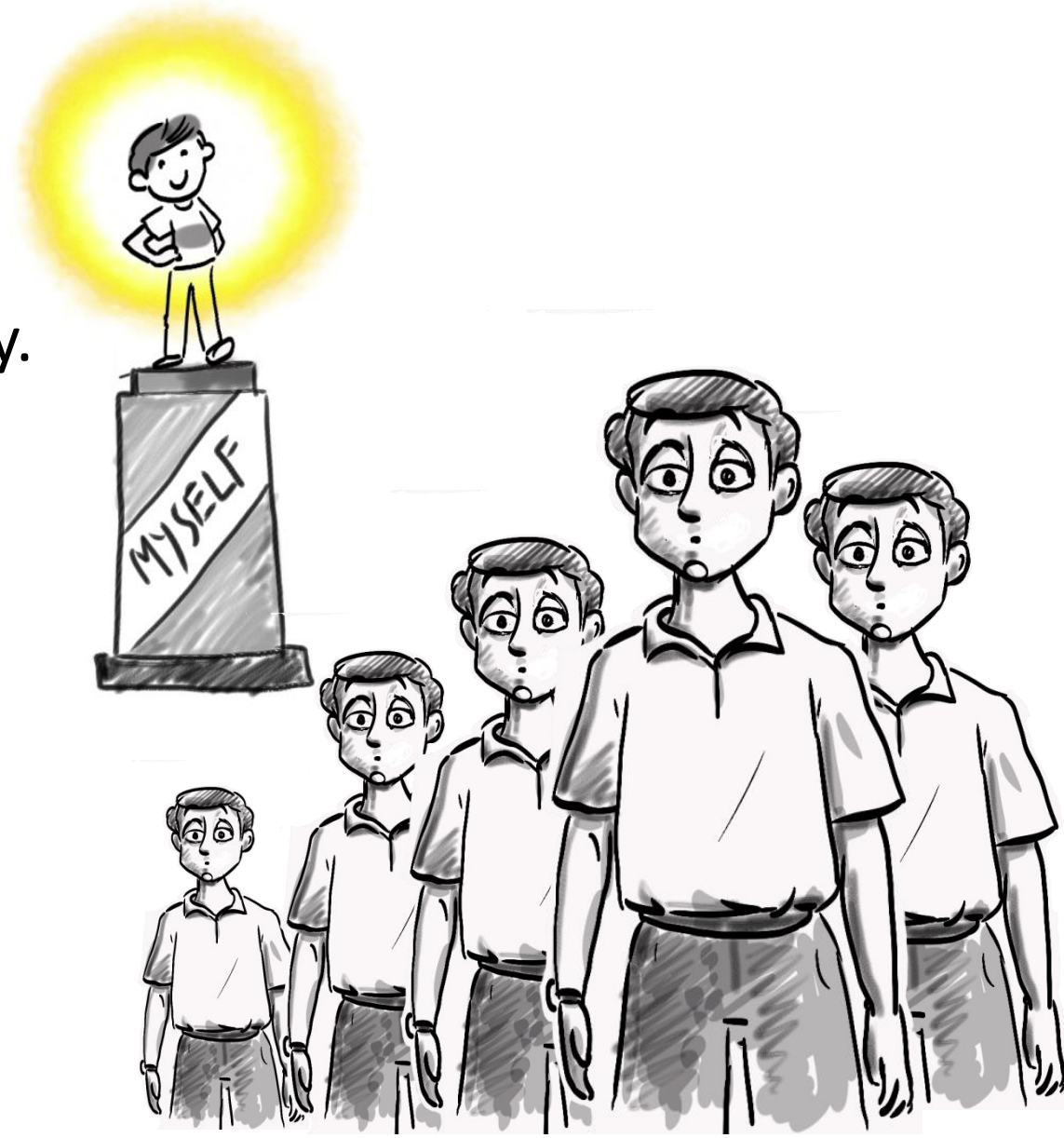
Non-goals of this story

✗ Self-promotion through auto-biography.



Non-goals of this story

- ✗ Self-promotion through auto-biography.
- ✗ Inspiring others to mimic my actions.



Non-goals of this story

- ~~Self promotion through auto biography.~~
- ~~Inspiring others to mimic my actions.~~
- ~~Evoke feelings of awe/adulation.~~
- ~~Get you to do what I do today.~~



Goals of this story

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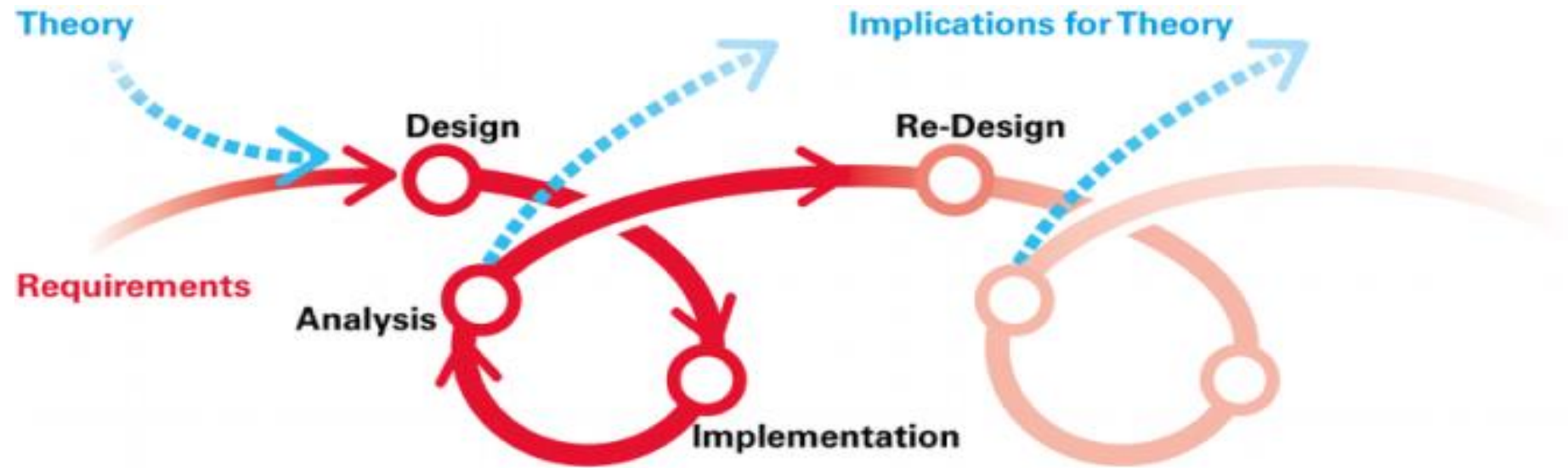
Goals of this story

- Share my process and reflections.
- Provide a case-study for learners.
- Hope that this will be useful for you, to adapt to your goals and situations.
- Entertain you:
 - I had fun creating it.
 - Feel free to laugh, at the story, at me. 😊

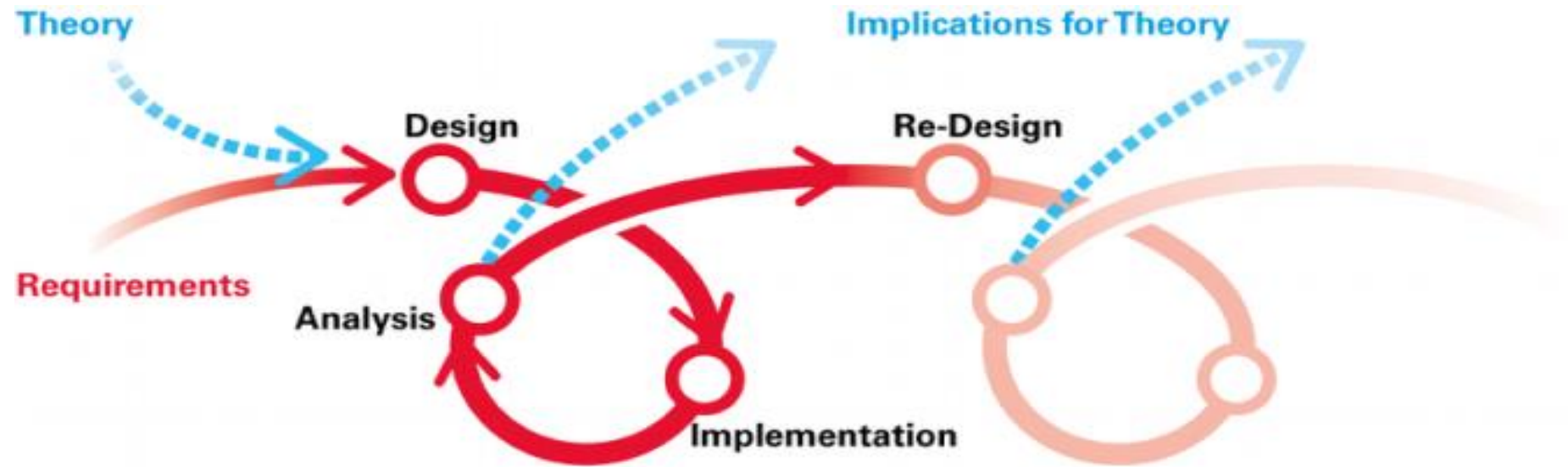


Broad approach

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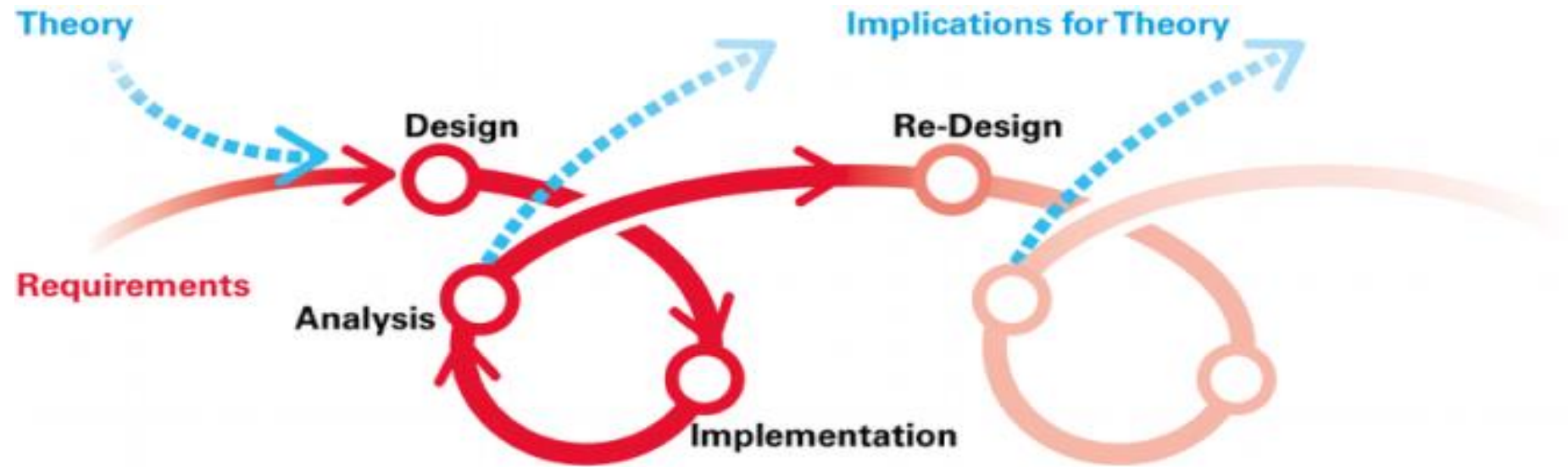


Broad approach



- At each stage, I will talk about:
 - What was the goal at that point in my life
Or Questions I was grappling with.
 - My approach to find answers.
 - Findings and Reflection.
 - Decisions for moving on to Next stage.

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- By giving some examples:
 - Scenic route detours!



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 - I have tried my best to recall them for this story.
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my
philosophy

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- **Goals** – Standard
- **Approach** – Hard work
- **Key Learnings:** Value of effort

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Reflection:

- Question Posing was restricted to academic content.
- Not yet started posing Questions on the academic process, purpose and value of education.

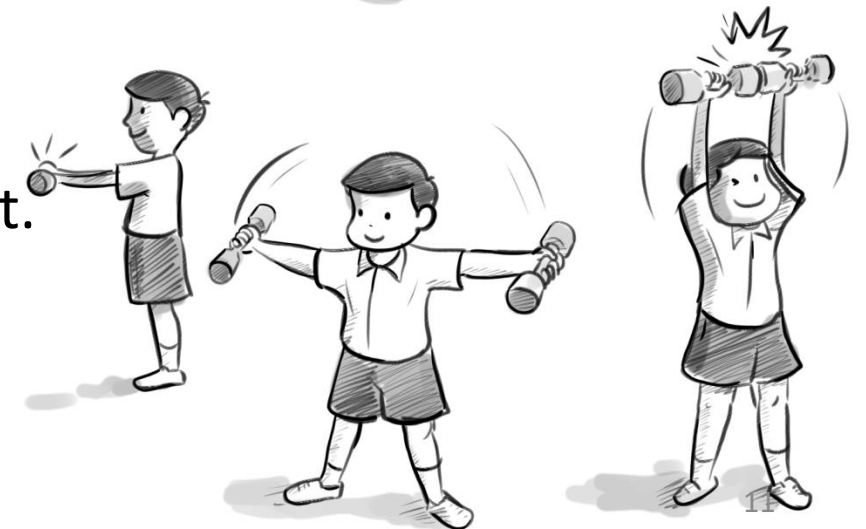
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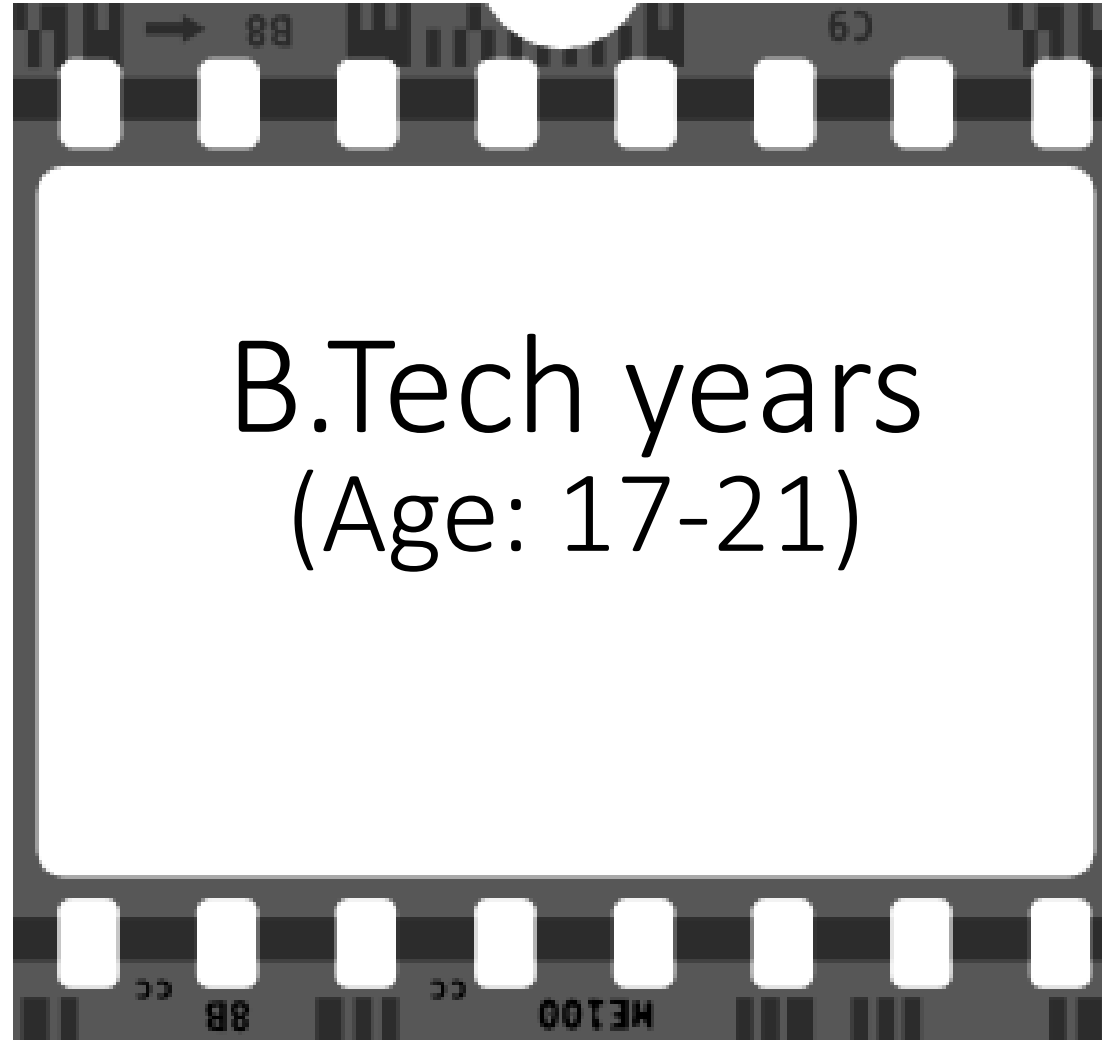
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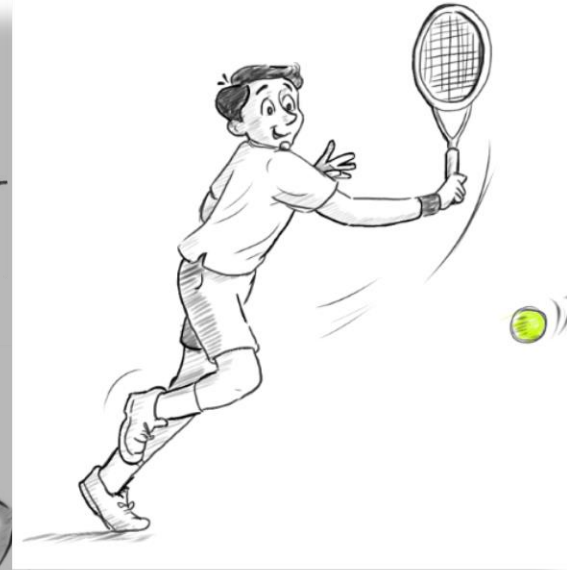
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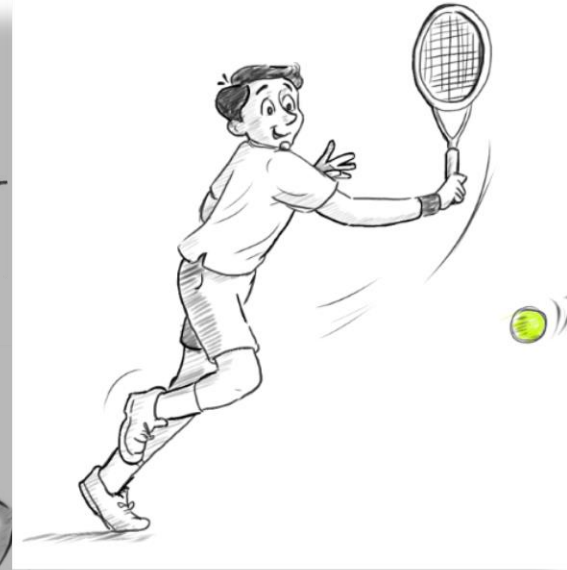
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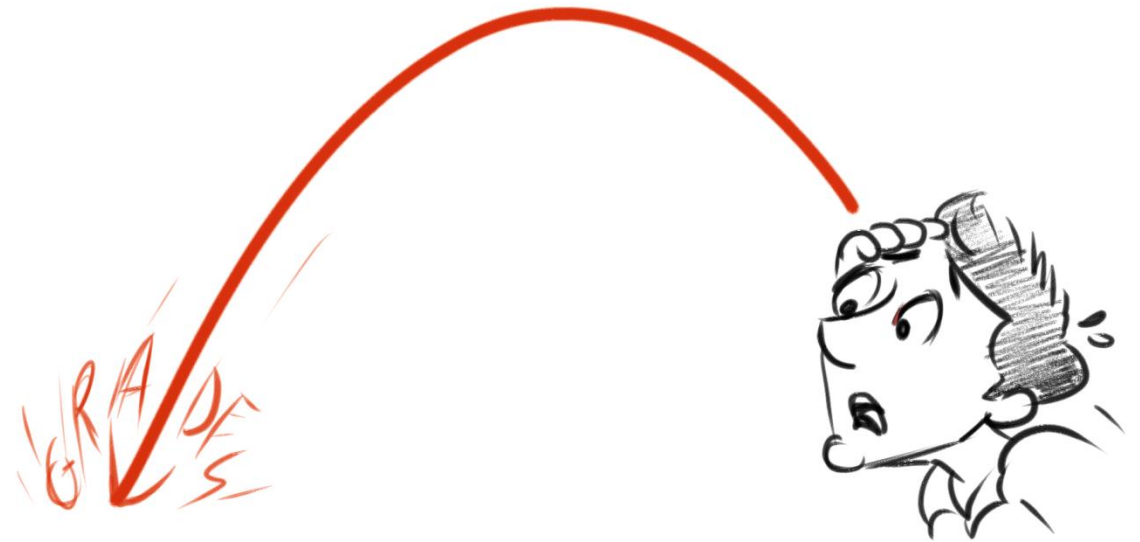
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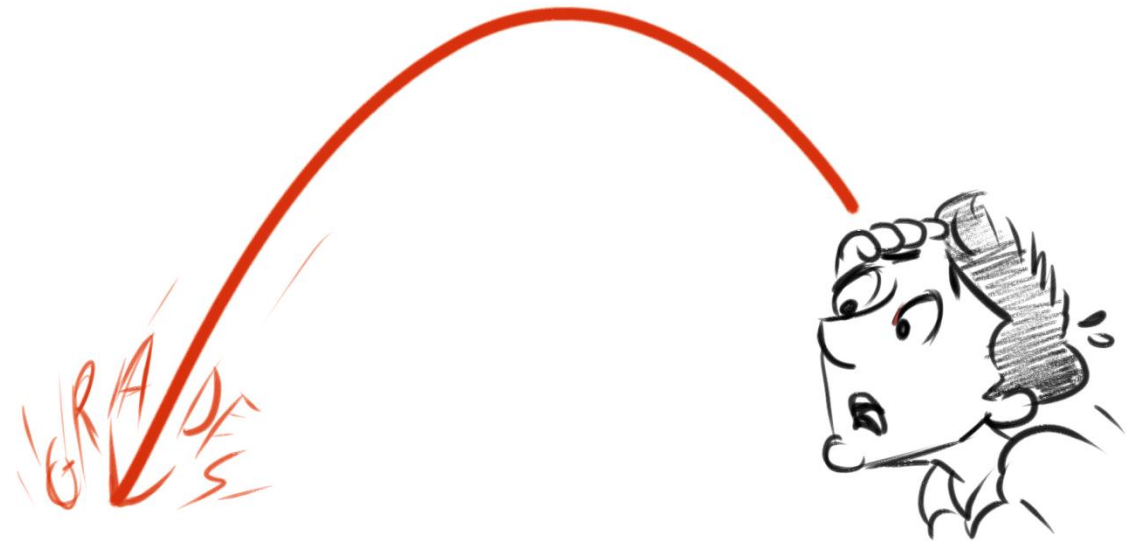
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 - Balance and priorities required.



B.Tech 1st year – Scenic route

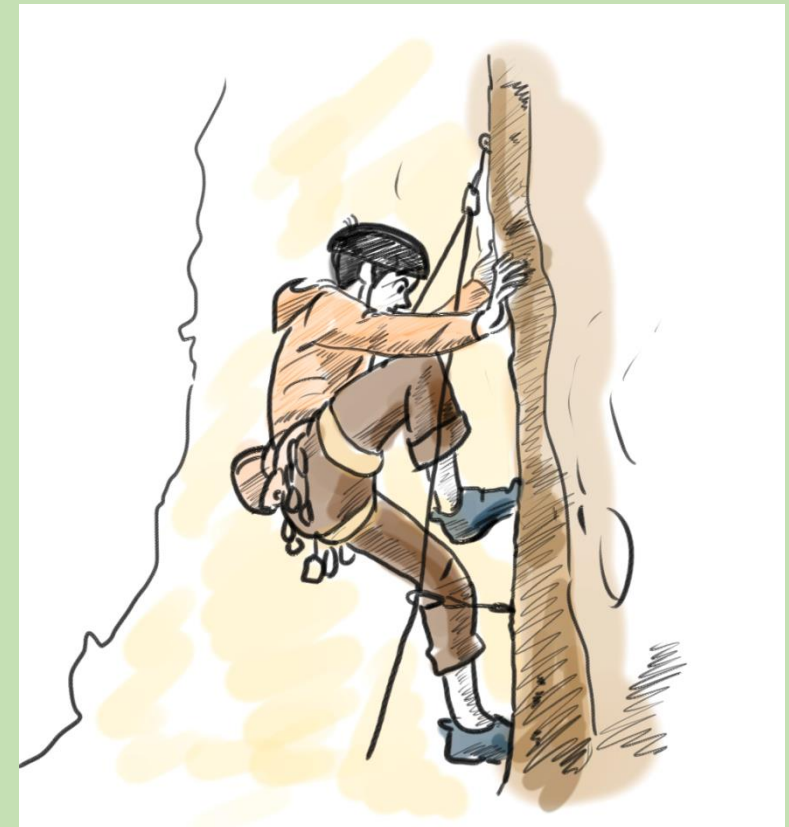




B.Tech 1st year – Scenic route

- **Certificate courses:**

- Ham Radio.
- Rock Climbing.
- [Mountaineering](#).





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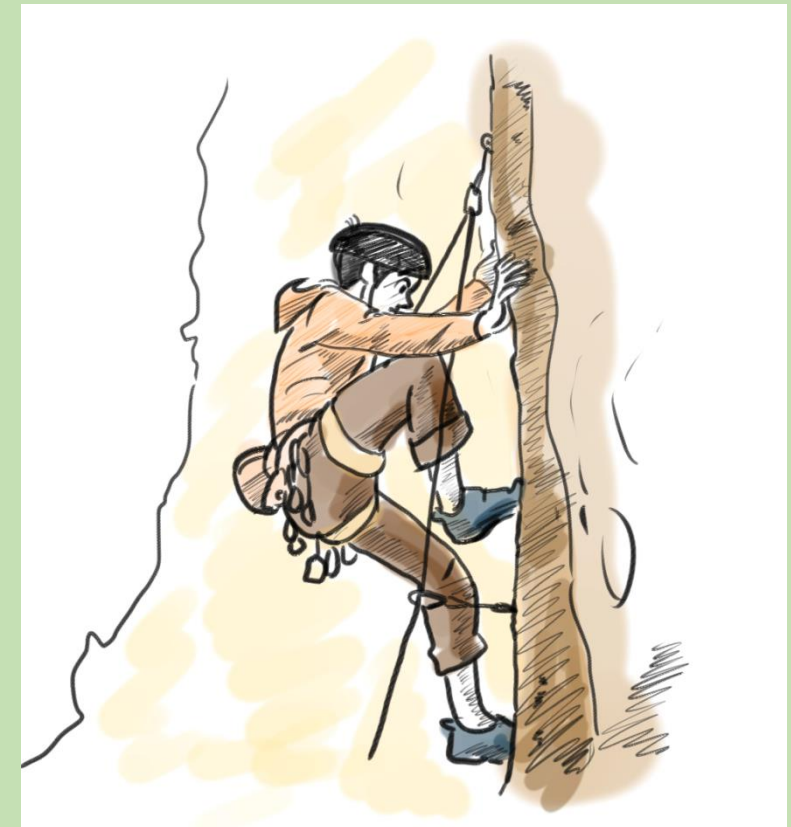
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- 1-month in Kashmir.
 - as an organizer of Himankan.
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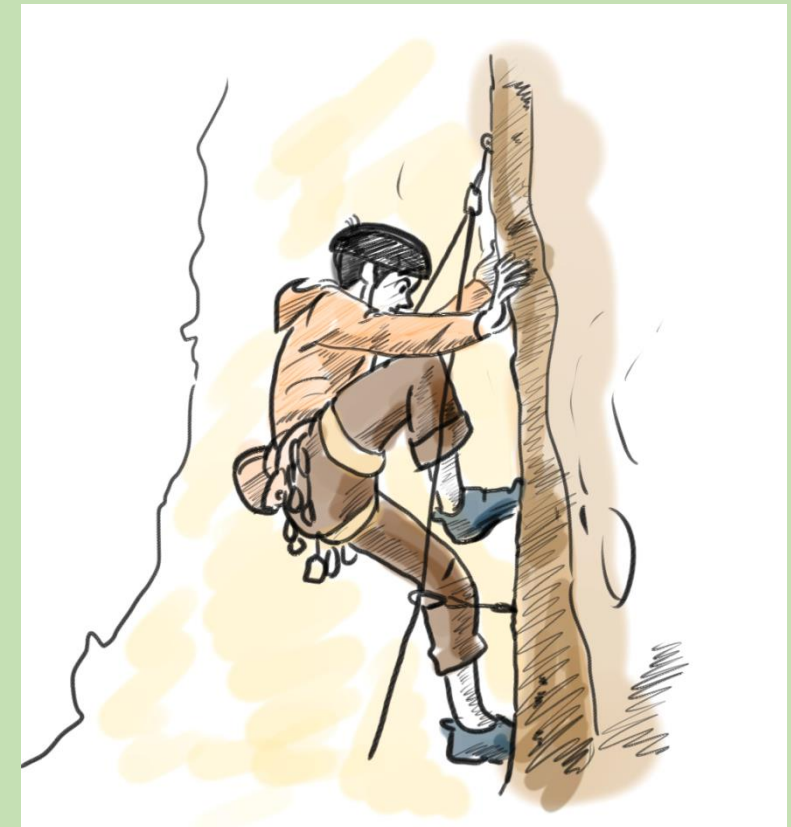


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- **Skills learned:**

- Tinkering, Logistics, Perseverance.



Looking back from today: B.Tech 1st year – Transfer of learning





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- **Then:**
 - Leading trek participants when I myself did not know the destination.





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- **Now:**
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 - Leading students through an unknown area, to an unknown destination.





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 - Leading students through an unknown area, to an unknown destination.

- **Always have fun along the way!**





B.Tech 1st year – Dark Moments

- Unsuccessful attempt to appear as a ‘cool’ fresher.
- Struggle to fit in with peers – conversations & activities.
- Difficulty in figuring out who is my friend and who is not.

B.Tech 2nd year – I will show these fellows!

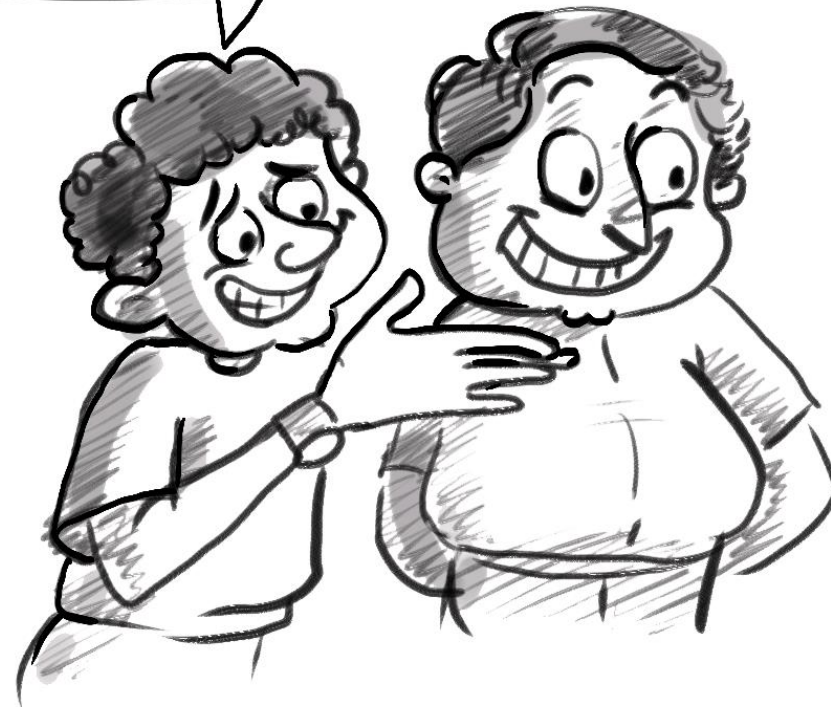
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अरे! तेरा इतना ही है CPI?



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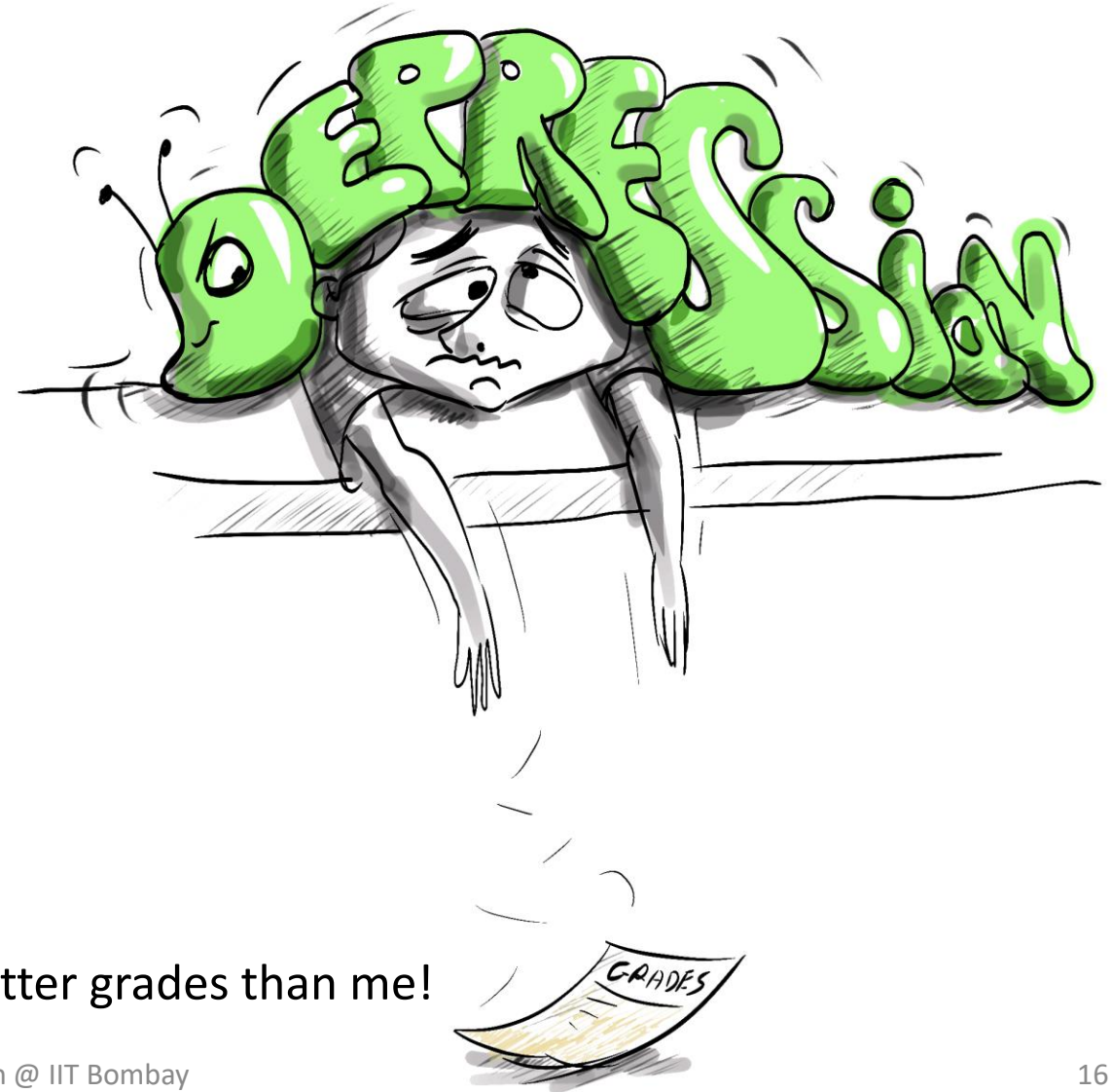
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 - No change in grades.
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 - Medical treatment for headaches, ...
- **Amusing anecdotes:**
 - Those who studied from my notes got better grades than me!




B.Tech 2nd year – Reflection

- performance  learning.

B.Tech 2nd year – Reflection

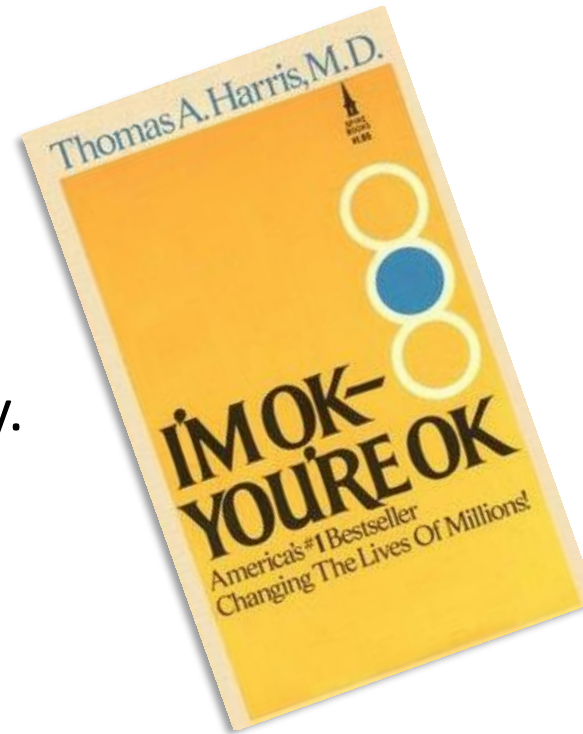
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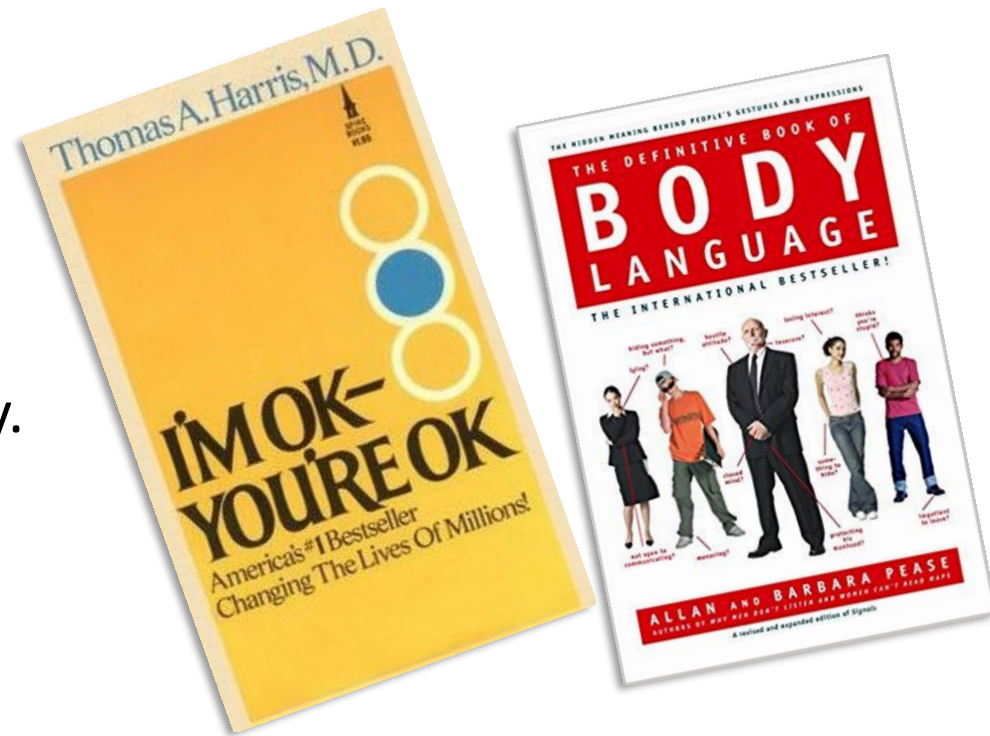
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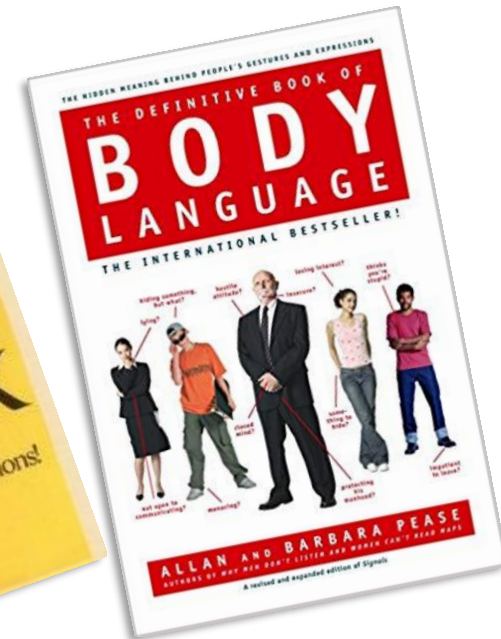
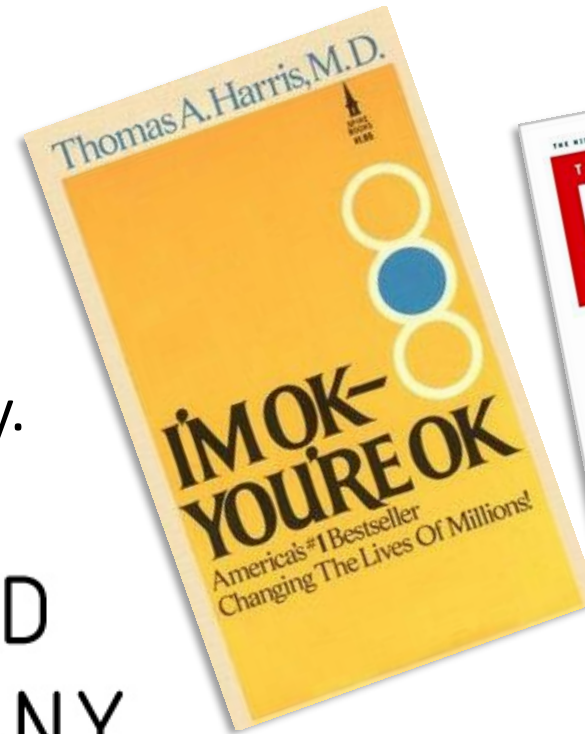
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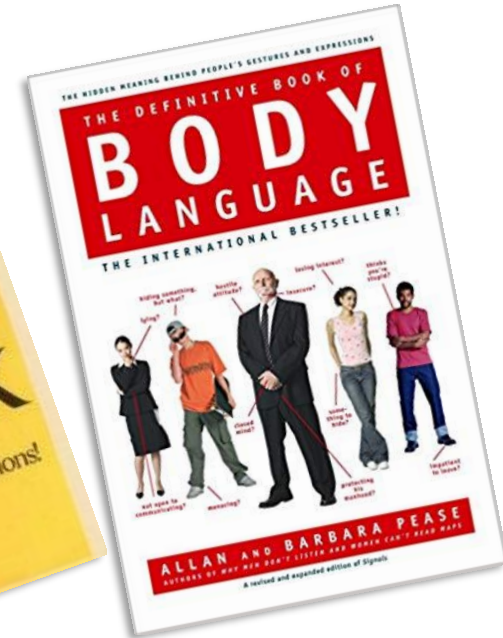
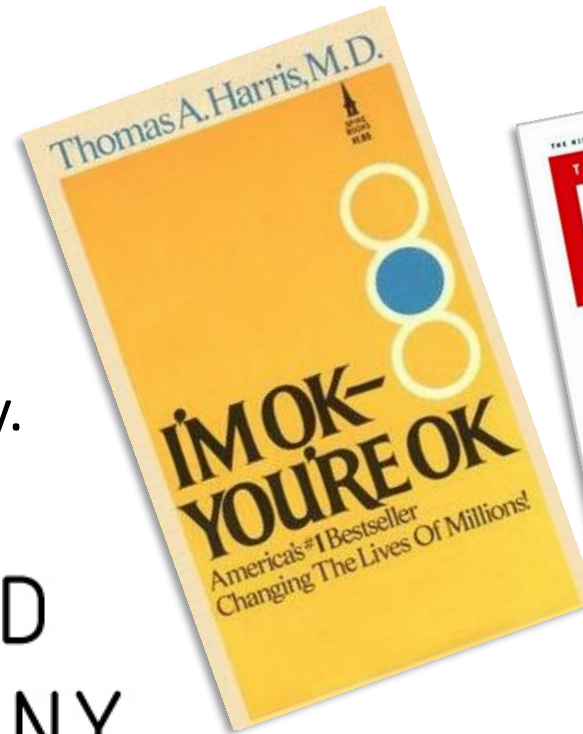
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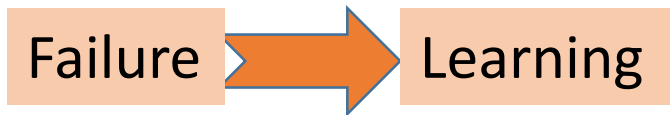
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MORE ...

B.Tech 2nd year – Reflection

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B.Tech 2nd year – Reflection



Failure leads to Learning...

B.Tech 2nd year – Scenic route





B.Tech 2nd year – Scenic route

- Experiments:



B.Tech 2nd year – Scenic route

- **Experiments:**
 - Used bicycle dealer.



B.Tech 2nd year – Scenic route

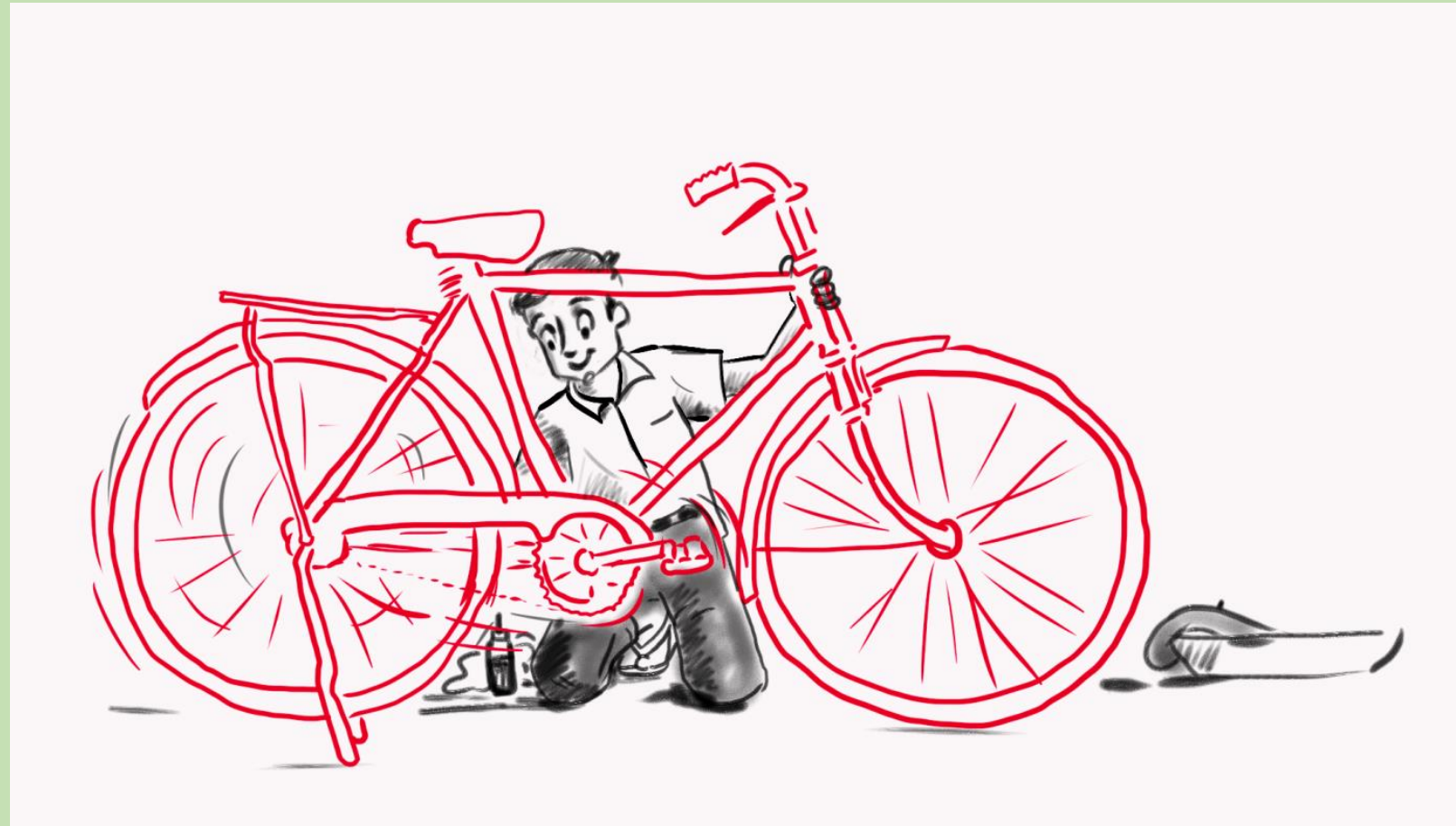
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- **Experiments:**
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- **Finding:**
 - People will pay good money to avoid simple household tasks!
 - Including Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers.



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- **Experiments:**

- Used bicycle dealer.
- Electrician.

- **Finding:**

- People will pay good money to avoid simple household tasks!
- Including Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers.

- **Skills learned:**

- Tinkering, Sales, Entrepreneurship.



B.Tech 2nd year – Predict the Outcome





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Suppose you sit in a tree outside Hostel 8, watching people pass by.
How many of those people are likely to notice you in the tree?



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B.Tech 2nd year – Predict the Outcome

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1. None
2. Few (1-2 out of 10)
3. Some (3-4 out of 10)
4. Many (5-7 out of 10)
5. Most (8-9 out of 10)
6. All





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Reflection Spot

I concluded that most people are preoccupied with themselves, most of the time. Do you agree?

- Recall any experiment that you have performed to support your answer.

pause



write your answers



play



Looking back from today: B.Tech 2nd year – Transfer of learning





Looking back from today: B.Tech 2nd year – Transfer of learning

- **Then:**
 - Gauging Demand vs Supply.
 - Customer education and relationships.



Looking back from today: B.Tech 2nd year – Transfer of learning

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- **Now:**
 - [Educational Technology](#).
 - Attempting to start similar programs in other institutes in the country.



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- **Now:**
 - [Educational Technology](#).
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- **Always focus on end-users!**



B.Tech 2nd year – Dark Moments

- Unsuccessful attempt to get good grades.
- Struggle to figure out what is meaningful.
- Difficulty in balancing academics with extra-curricular activities.

B.Tech 3rd year – Aha moment!

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- **Goal:** Reflect on learning, life, goals ...
- **Approach:** Reading, Doing, Thinking

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- **Approach:** Reading, Doing, Thinking
- **Amusing anecdotes:**
 - Spent hours sitting at Vihar lake.
 - Had dogs living with me in the hostel.
 - 4-5 dogs over 12 years.
 - Also cats, a squirrel, a koel, ...



B.Tech 3rd year – Reflection

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 - Perhaps I should become a teacher!
 - Focus on learning CS, not on exams.



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- Whatever I can do, I can teach.
- **Reflection:**
 - Perhaps I should become a teacher!
 - Focus on learning CS, not on exams.
- **Amusing anecdotes:**
 - **Never got an AA all through my B.Tech.**
 - I was the topper in one course, but the Prof. did not give a single AA in that course.





B.Tech 3rd year – Scenic route

- Experiments:



B.Tech 3rd year – Scenic route

- **Experiments:**
 - Walking barefoot.





B.Tech 3rd year – Scenic route

- **Experiments:**
 - Walking barefoot.
 - Not talking 1 day/week.





B.Tech 3rd year – Scenic route

- **Experiments:**

- Walking barefoot.
- Not talking 1 day/week.

- **Finding:**

- Once people classify you as a weirdo, they leave you alone.
- Then you become free to walk your own path, without worrying about '[log kya kahenge](#)' syndrome.

B.Tech 3rd year – Quotes



SRIDHAR
R
IYER

REFLECTIONS

(My personal collection of thought-provoking
APHORISMS)

Started on : 15/6/1987
Reached 1000 : 15/6/1990.
1300 : 15/6/1992
1500 : 15/6/1994

“
The only way to read a book of Aphorisms
without being bored is to open it at
random and, having found something that
interests you, close the book and meditate.”

“
Solomon made a book of proverbs,
but a book of proverbs never made
a Solomon.”

“
What the first philosopher taught,
the last will have to repeat.”

B.Tech 3rd year – Quotes



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“
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Decision:
No need to keep
names or sources.

I am more interested
in what wise people
have said, rather than
who said what and
when, exactly.

Looking back from today: B.Tech 3nd year – Transfer of learning





Looking back from today: B.Tech 3nd year – Transfer of learning

- **Then:**
 - Core group of Himankan.
 - Taking 200 people to trek in himalayas.



Looking back from today: B.Tech 3rd year – Transfer of learning

- **Then:**

- Core group of Himankan.
- Taking 200 people to trek in himalayas.

- **Now:**

- [TUET projects](#).
- Sustainability with scale.



B.Tech 3rd year – Dark Moments

- Making peace with learning vs performance.
- Should I do what everyone else is doing?
- How do I walk my own path while blending in?

B.Tech 4th year – Off the beaten track!

B.Tech 4th year – Off the beaten track!

- **Goal:** Figure out what to do
- **Findings:**
 - I know what I don't want to do.

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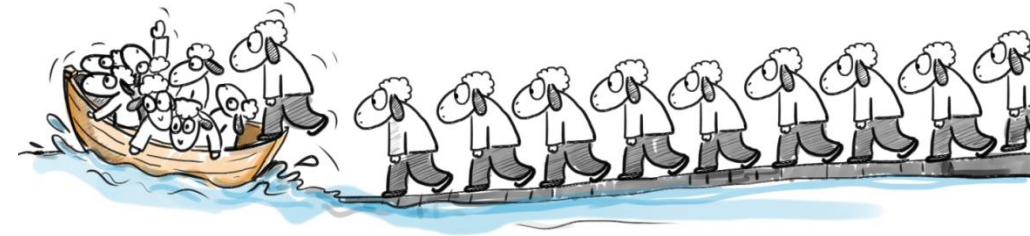
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- **Goal:** Figure out what to do
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 - I know what I don't want to do.
- **Approach:**
 - Look at someone who has a lot of money/fame/whatever.
 - See the *pros-cons* of their life.
 - Do you want it?



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B.Tech 4th year – Reflection

I need more time to figure out what I want to do

B.Tech 4th year – Reflection

I need more time to figure out what I want to do



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- **Solution:**

- IITB is a nice place to hang around.
- I have not had enough of Vihar lake.

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B.Tech 4th year – Reflection

I need more time to figure out what I want to do

- **Solution:**

- IITB is a nice place to hang around.
- I have not had enough of Vihar lake.
- I don't know enough of CS yet.
- Perhaps I should do M.Tech!



Reflection Spot

I find the 'Neti-Neti' (not this, not this) method of 'truth-seeking' to be useful for decision-making.

- Recall any time that you have used this method for your decisions.

pause



write your answers



play



B.Tech 4th year – Scenic route





B.Tech 4th year – Scenic route

How many times did I meet my B.Tech guide?



B.Tech 4th year – Scenic route

How many times did I meet my B.Tech guide?

1. Once a week.
2. Once a month.
3. A few times.



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Topic: *Image recognition using contour detection*. Prof. Phatak was my guide!
I did 3rd year summer internship in Godrej and continued with the same project.
Focused on Application (solving the given problem), from first principles.

Looking back from today: B.Tech 4th year – Transfer of learning





Looking back from today: B.Tech 4th year – Transfer of learning

- **Then:**
 - Worked hard on a meaningful problem.
 - Examiner was not impressed, compared to glamorous, hot-area BTPs.



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 - [Computer Masti](#).
 - Selection Committee was not impressed.



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Looking back from today: B.Tech 4th year – Transfer of learning

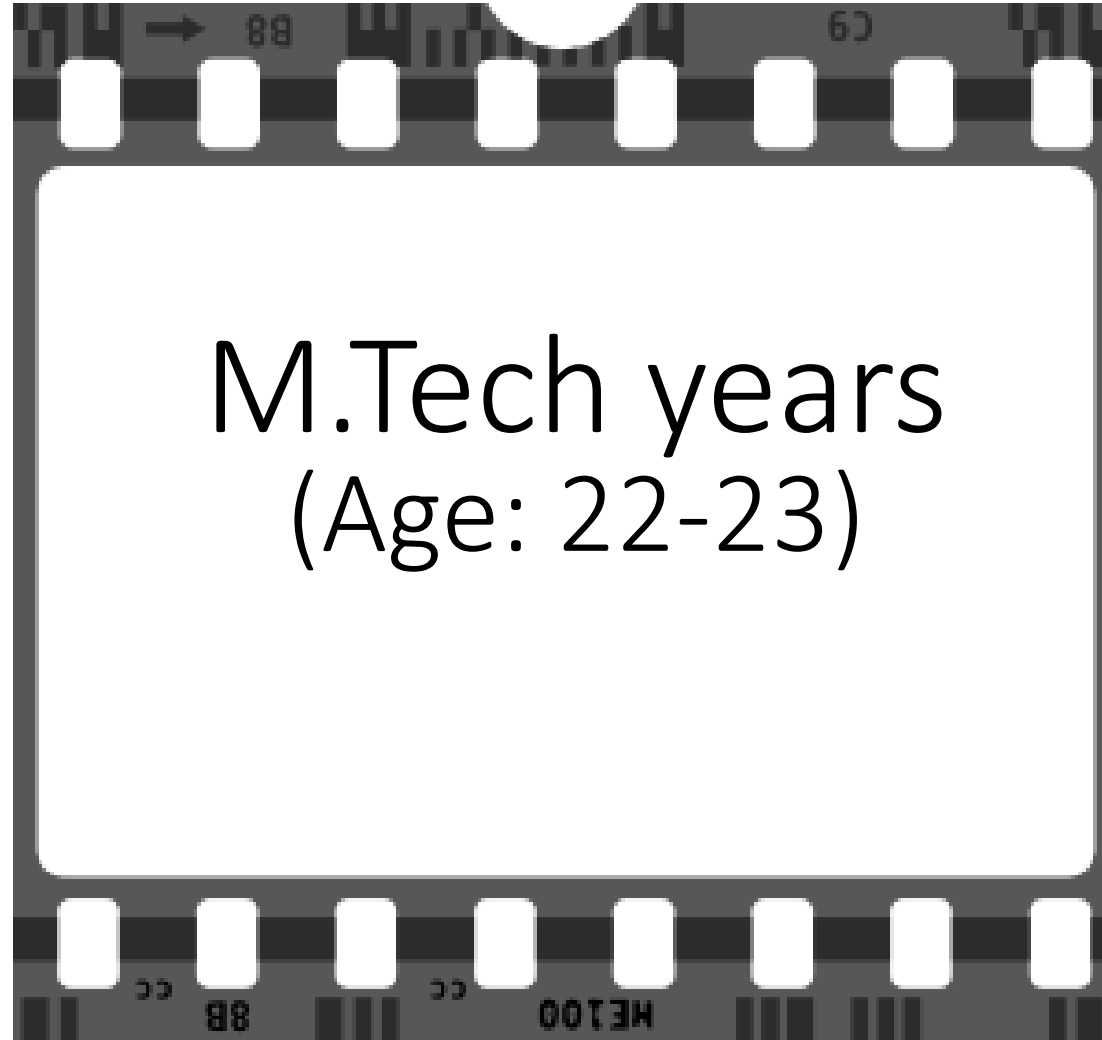
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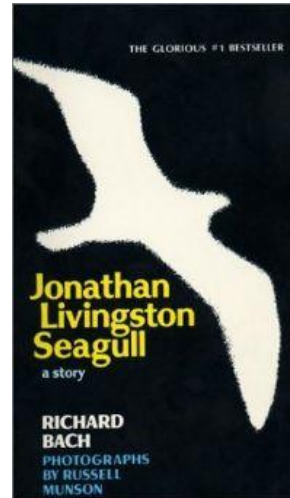
B.Tech 4th year – Dark Moments

- What are my career goals?
- What do I want to do with my life?
- How do I proceed?



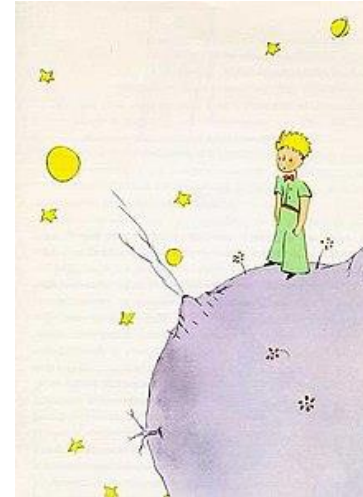
Lots of Reading

To name a few authors ...



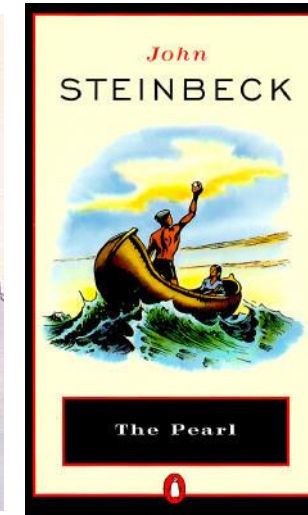
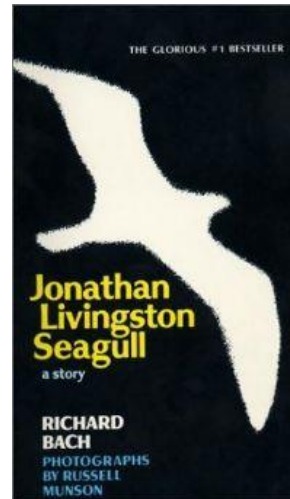
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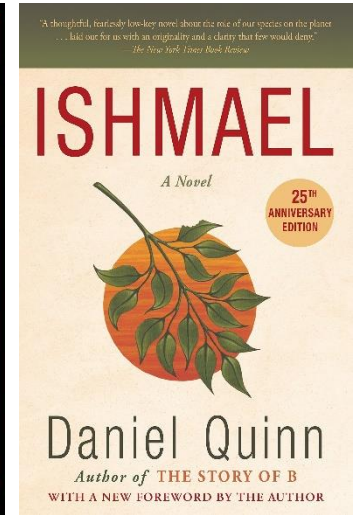
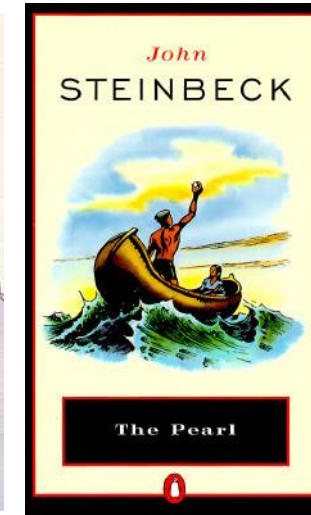
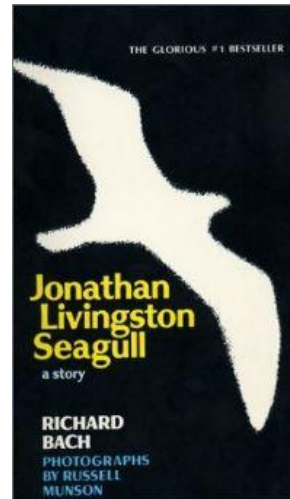
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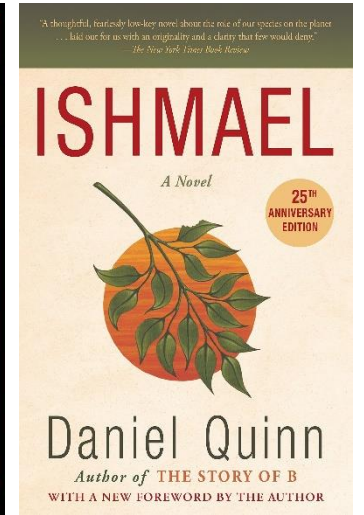
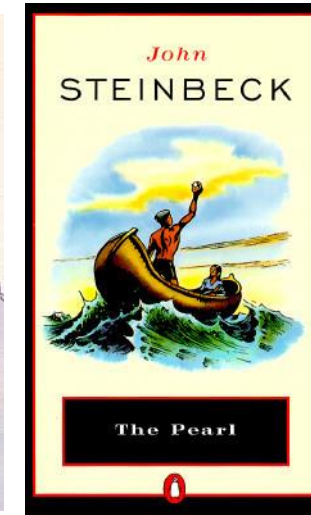
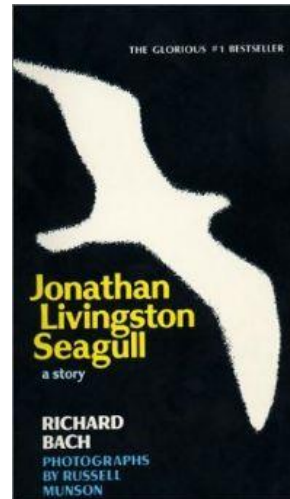
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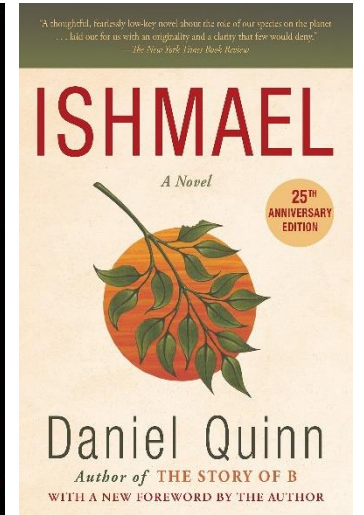
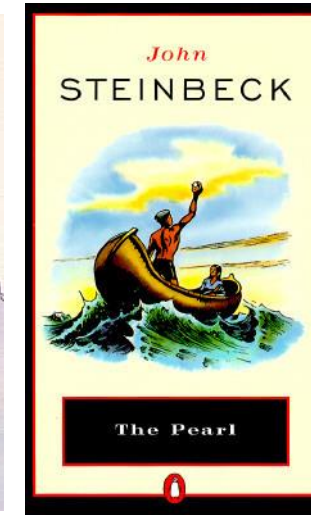
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Three Questions

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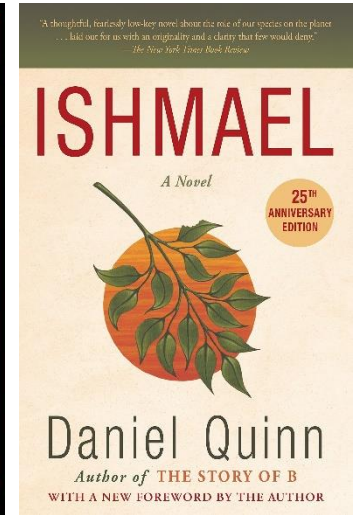
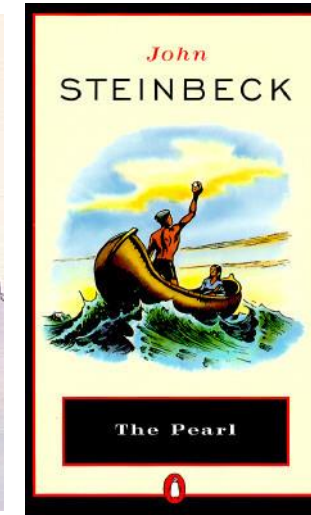
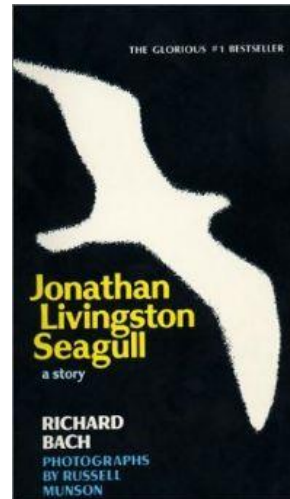


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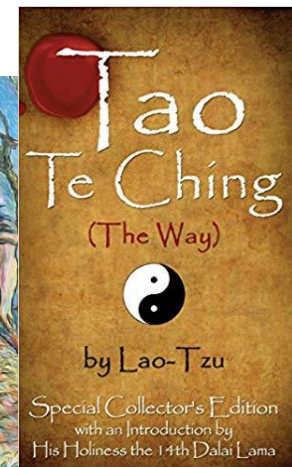


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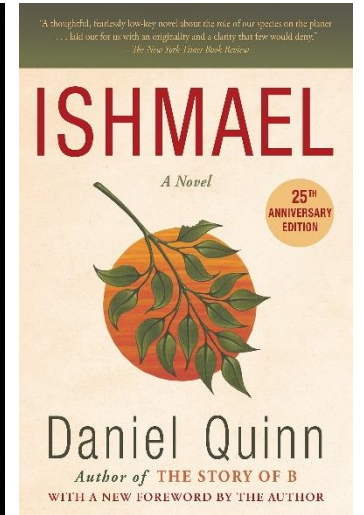
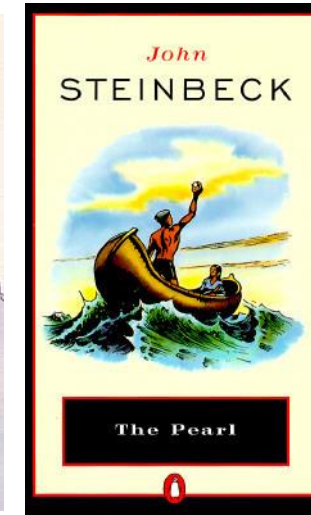
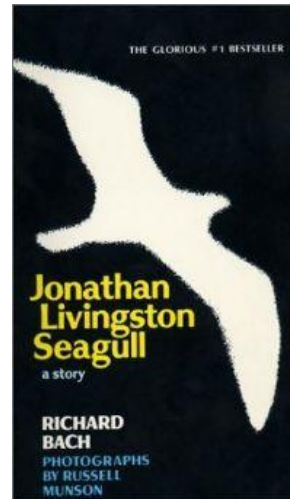


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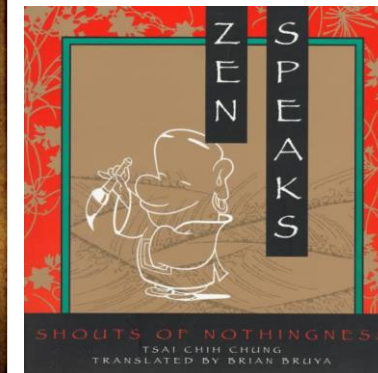
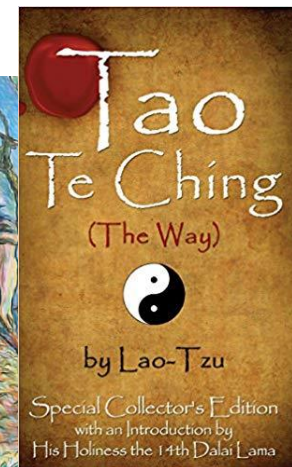


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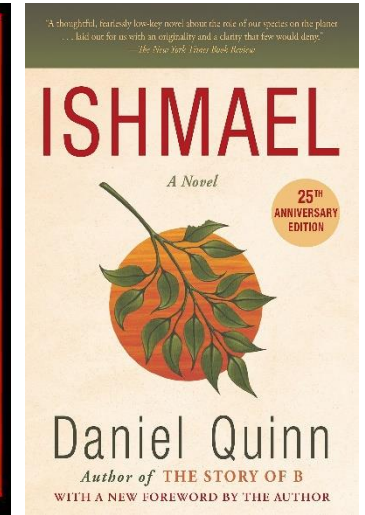
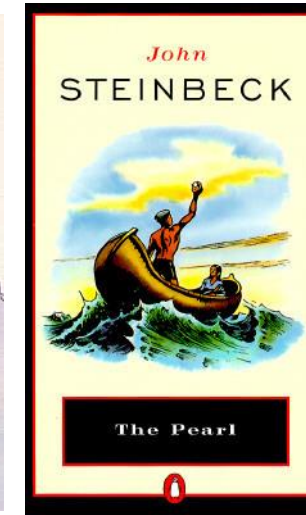
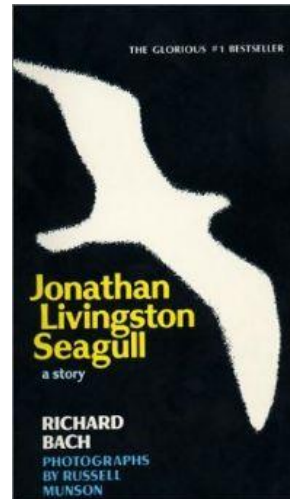


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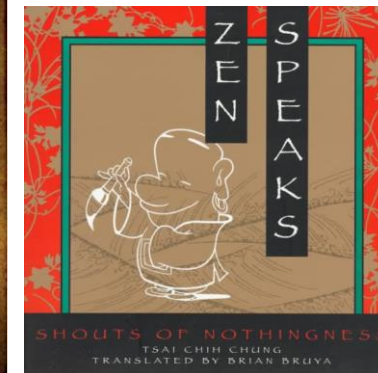
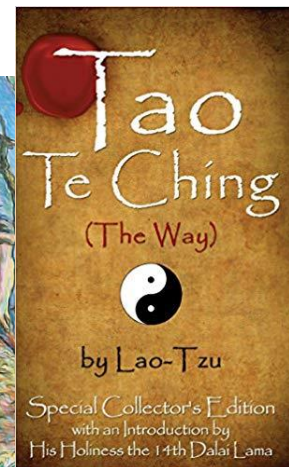


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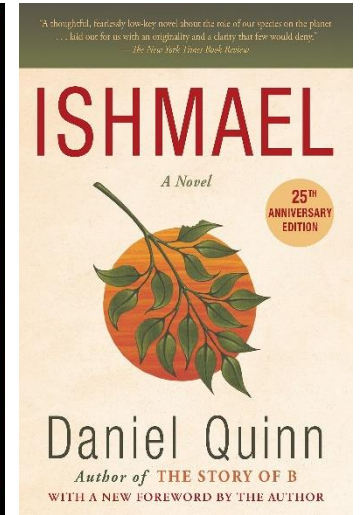
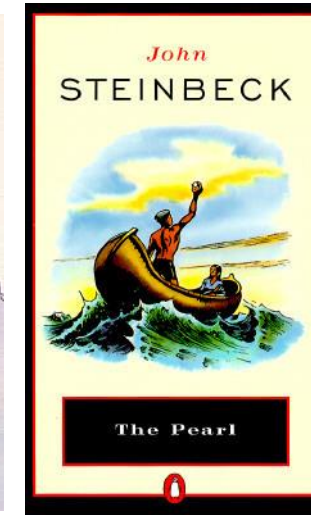
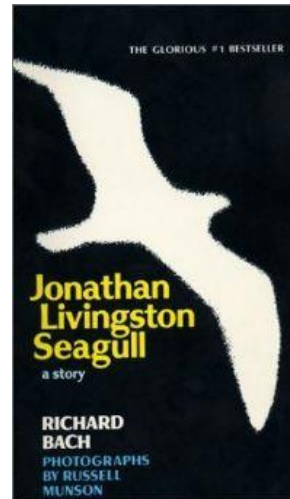


AND
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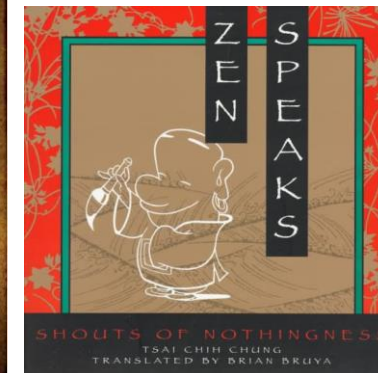
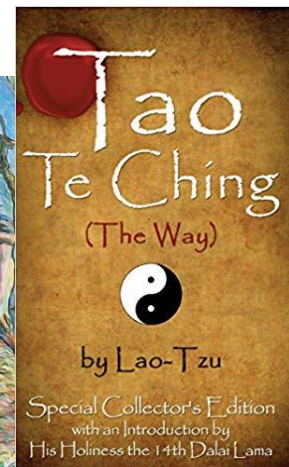
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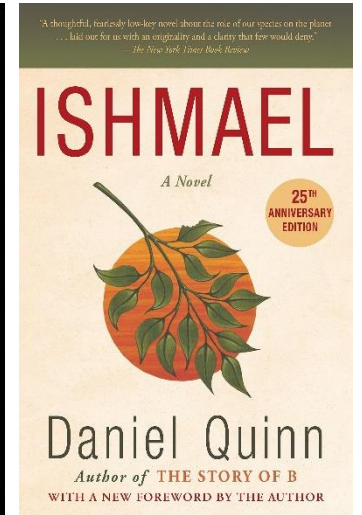
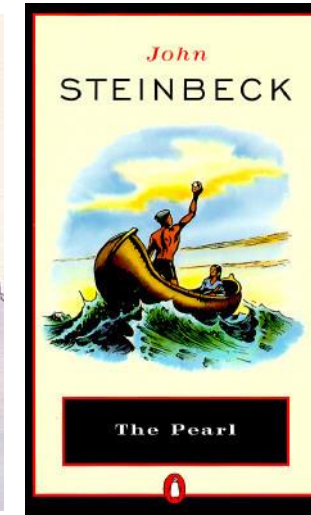
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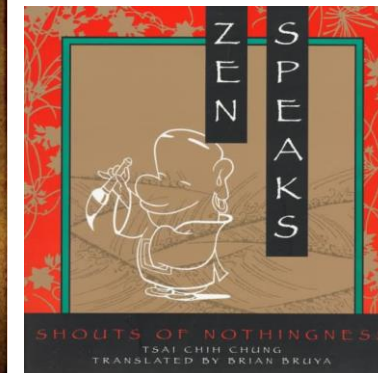
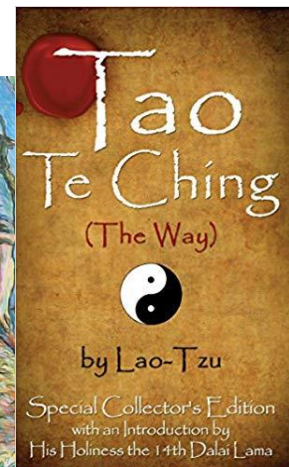
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Three Questions



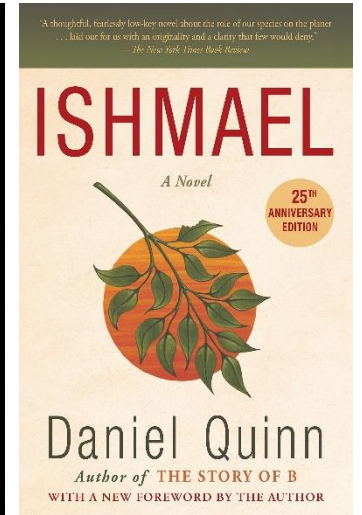
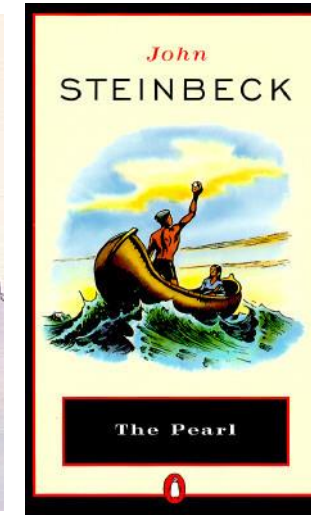
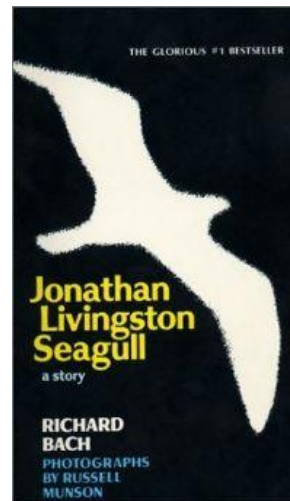
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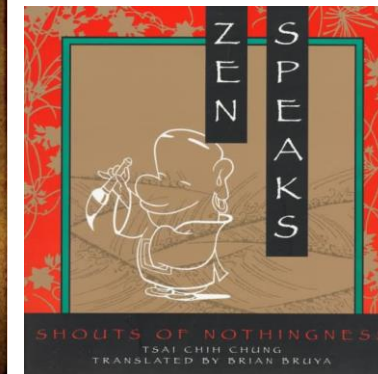
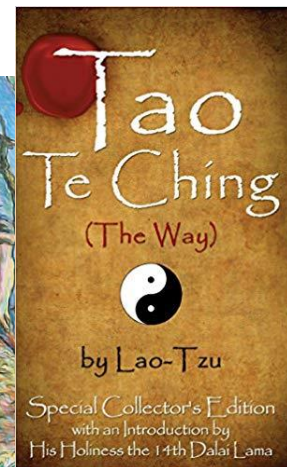
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Three Questions



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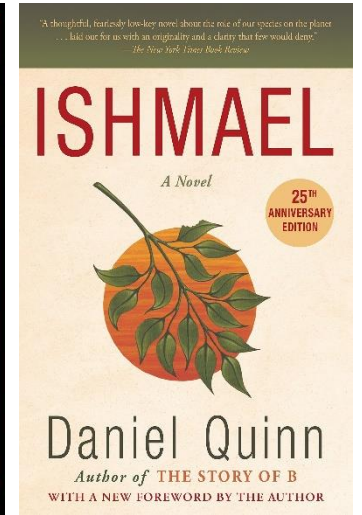
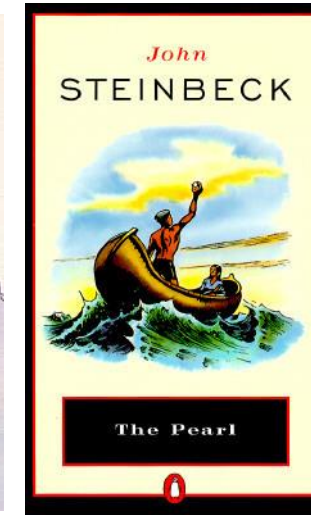
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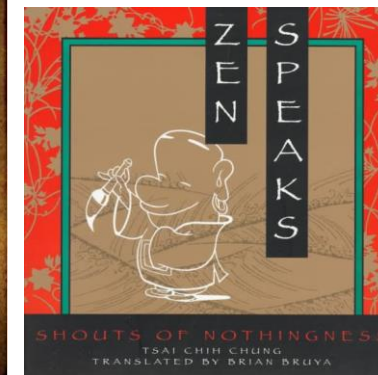
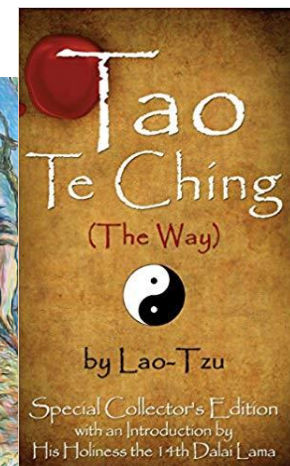
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- Biographies – Scientists, Sportspersons



Three Questions



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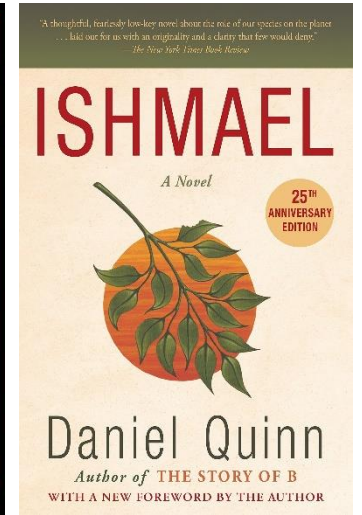
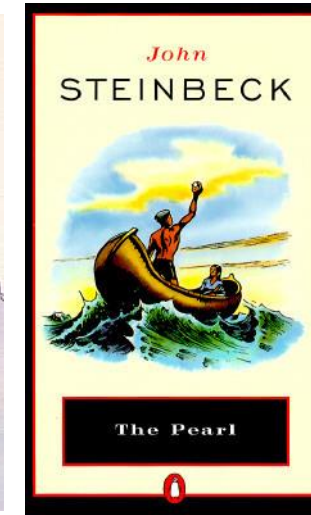
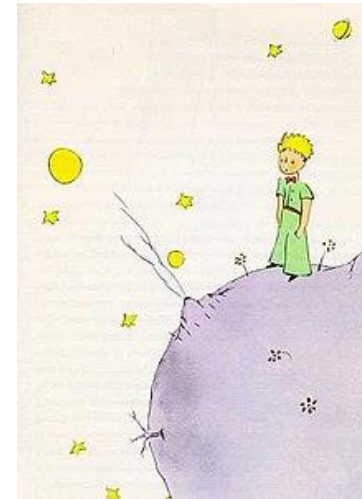
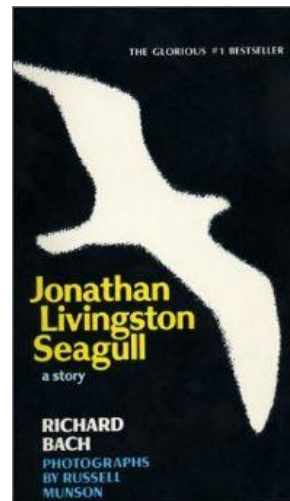
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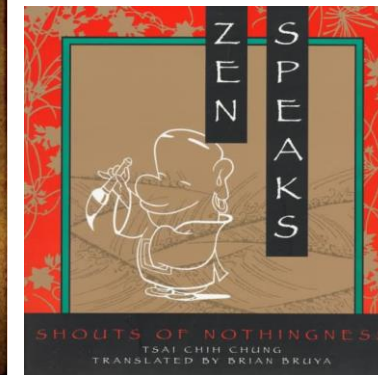
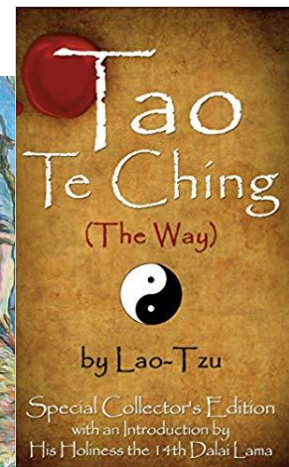
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- Biographies – Scientists, Sportspeople
- Western philosophy – Biographies
- Eastern philosophy - Tao-Te-Ching; Zen

Collected Quotes from all of them.



Three Questions



AND
MANY
MORE ...

More Doing and Reflecting

More Doing and Reflecting

- Conducted workshops – CS topics.
- Part-time tutoring of campus kids.



More Doing and Reflecting



- Conducted workshops – CS topics.
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- Campus activism – conservation.
- More treks, cycle treks and wildlife.

More Doing and Reflecting

- Conducted workshops – CS topics.
- Part-time tutoring of campus kids.
- Campus activism – conservation.
- More treks, cycle treks and wildlife.

Reflection:

- Want to do something in rural education.
- Not enough courage to jump into it.
- Need more exposure - Go abroad for PhD.

M.Tech – Scenic route





M.Tech – Scenic route

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M.Tech – Scenic route

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3. Twice a week.
4. A few times.

Topic: *Distributed Systems theory*. Prof. Dhamdhere was my guide.



M.Tech – Scenic route

How many times did I meet my M.Tech guide?

1. Once a week.
2. Once a month.
3. Twice a week.
4. A few times.

Topic: *Distributed Systems theory*. Prof. Dhamdhere was my guide.

He had a daily 4:30 pm meeting slot for students. I learned rigor and diligence.

Outcome: My MTP got over in 6 months. We published a paper on it.

M.Tech – Scenic route





M.Tech – Scenic route

- **Volleyball:**
 - Captain + Coach of hostel team.
 - Member of IIT team.



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- **Learnings:**
 - How to be involved and detached at the same time!
 - Being in the present moment.
 - Team management, Leadership.



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 - We were winning, hostel-mates started cheering for opposite team, and then we lost.



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M.Tech – Scenic route





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 - Nepal - Annapoorna Base Camp.
 - Sahyadri - 4-day solo trek.





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- Being alone is scary but it makes you strong.
- If you enjoy Solitude, you will never be Lonely.





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M.Tech – Dark Moments

- I still haven't figured out what exactly to do.
- Am I making the right choices?
- Why bother?

Reflection Spot

I found that I was able to transfer learning from one domain (Volleyball / Trekking) to another (EdTech). Have you found this happening in your life?

- Recall any activity from which you have done a transfer of learning.

pause

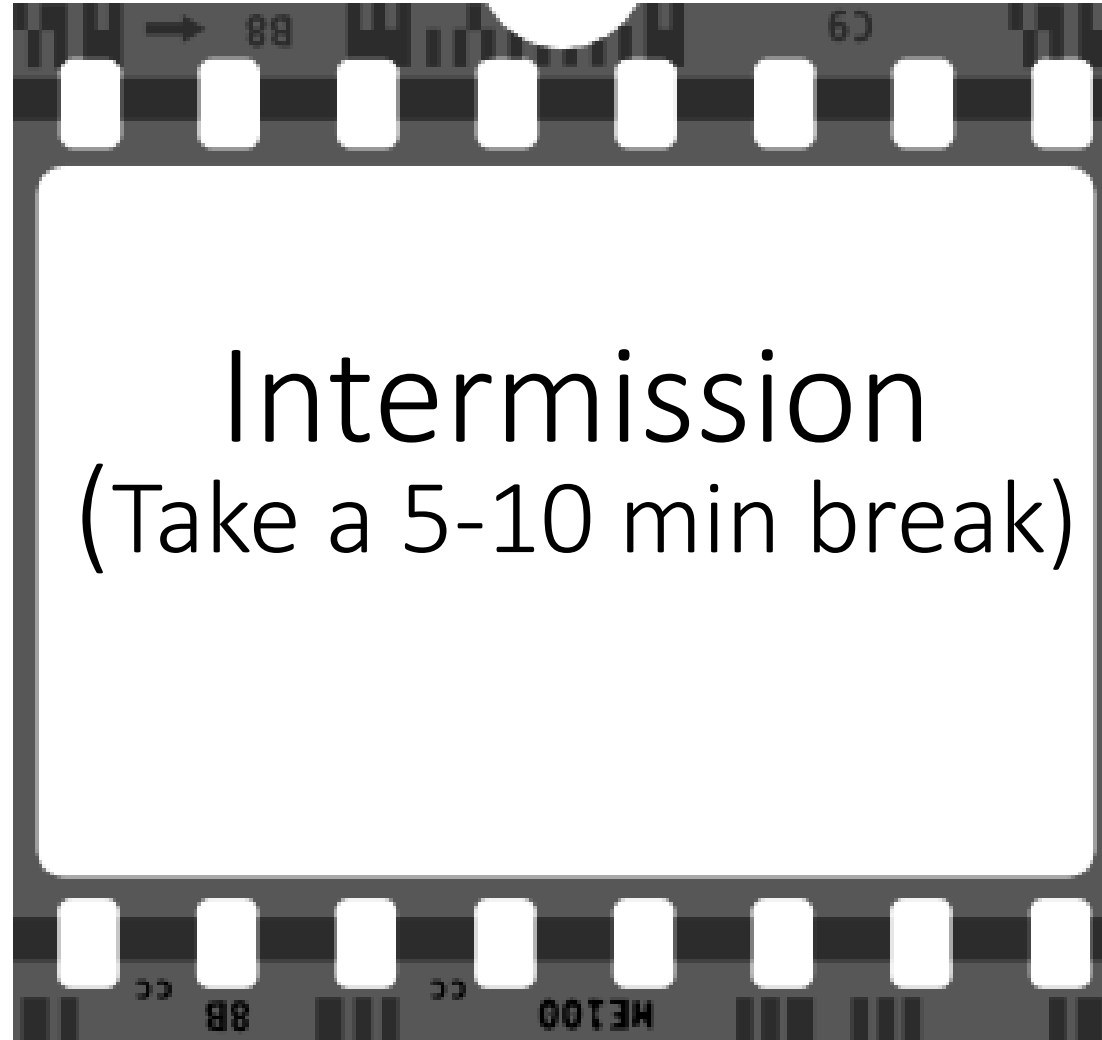


write your answers



play







PennState – 1 year

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- Did not want to work on advisor-defined problems.

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Intention

- Take the plunge into rural education.

PennState – Scenic route





PennState – Scenic route

- **Trekking:**
 - Went to ~15 [National Parks](#) out of ~60 in US
 - East coast and West coast.

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- Desire to ‘see places, climb mountains’ satisfied.
- Find beauty and peace wherever you are.





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 - Find beauty and peace wherever you are.
- **Anecdotes:**
 - Spent all my TA earnings in travel. Returned broke.





PennState – Dark Moments

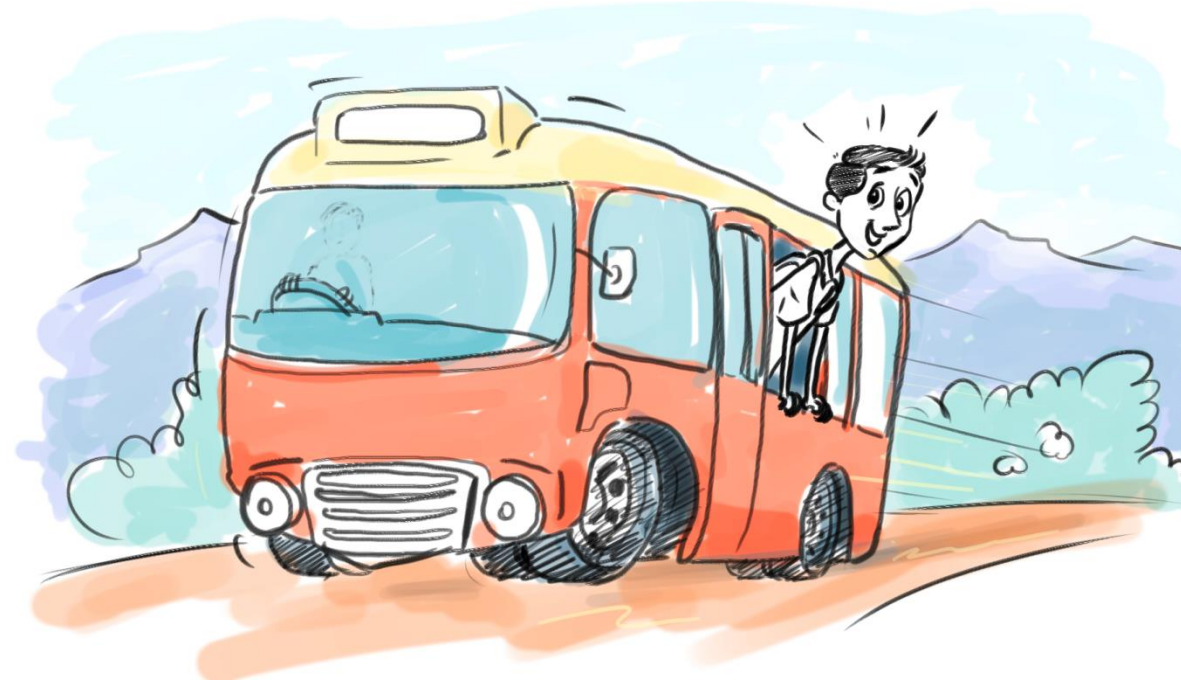
- To quit or not to quit.
- Have I done sufficient pros-cons analysis?
- Do I have the courage to follow my heart?

Back in India



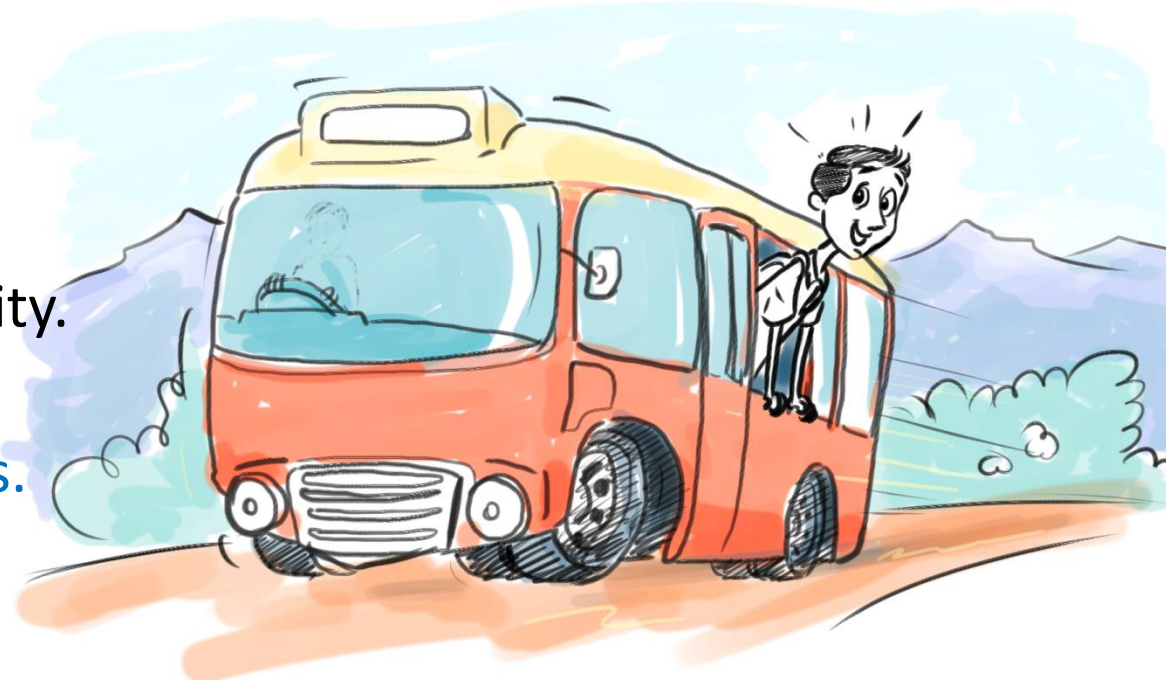
Back in India

- **Tour the country**
 - Buy a ticket, board a train.
 - Jump into a bus.
 - Nepal - Everest Base Camp



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 - **Broaden the vision and Deepen the roots.**



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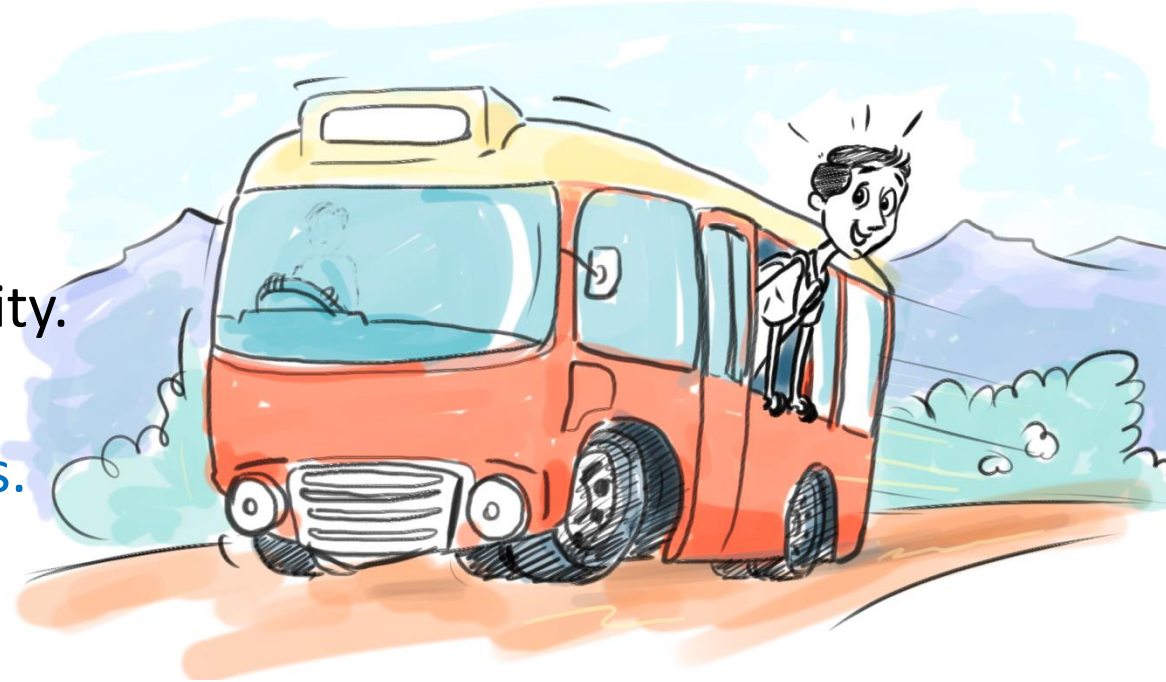
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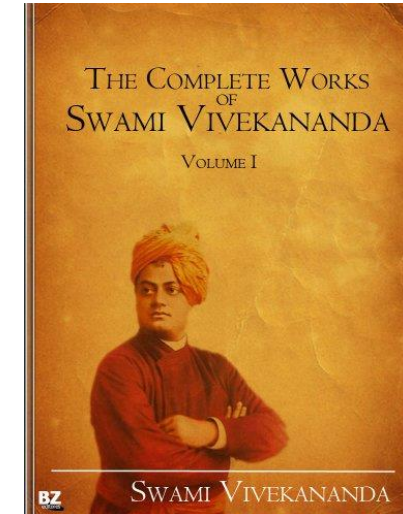
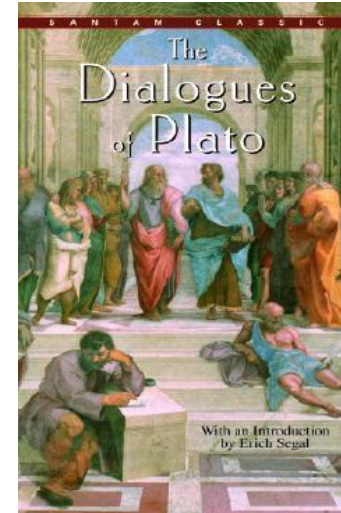
- Parents getting jittery, I am not cut out for regular jobs, so join for PhD!



Ph.D 1st year – Plato and Vivekananda

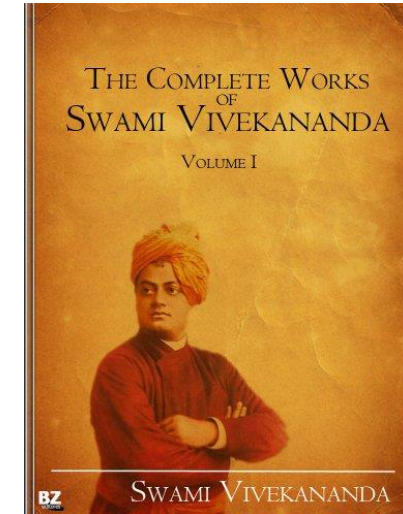
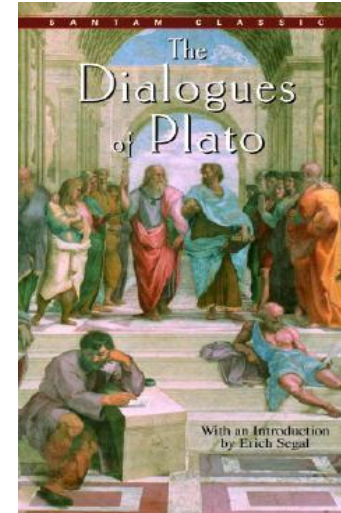
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[Snehasadan](#)

[VOICE](#)

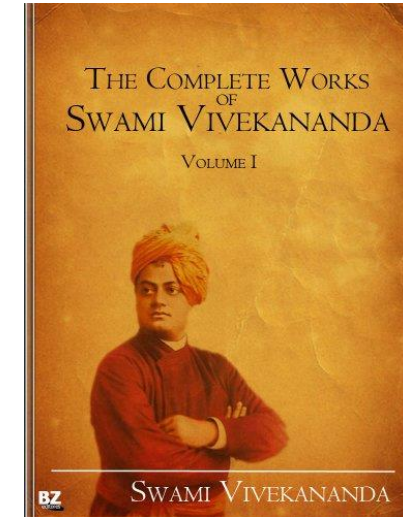
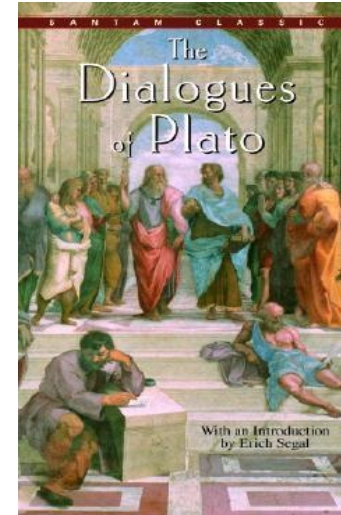
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and some more ...

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 - Doing – Work with Edu NGOs.
 - Reflecting – What-Why-How.
- **Outcome:**
 - Learnings on how NGOs are run.
 - Funding, reporting, numbers, overhead, ...



[Snehasadan](#)

[VOICE](#)

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and some more ...



PhD 1st year – Scenic route

- NGOs:



PhD 1st year – Scenic route

- **NGOs:**
 - Decided to volunteer in a few NGOs to get first hand view before jumping into it.
 - Found huge diversity – Activists, Thinkers, Gamers, Bureaucratic, ...



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 - Hey, these guys are more capable than me!
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 - Quietly working to transform a land and its people.



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Key Learning:
I may not want to join an existing NGO full-time.

PhD 1st year – Scenic route





PhD 1st year – Scenic route

- PhD:
- They: “How is it going?”
- Me: “Fine”.



LOOK FOR a
decent
paying job.

PhD 1st year – Scenic route

- PhD:
- They: “How is it going?”
- Me: “Fine”.

The actual plan

I am going to be a researcher.



The plan
You tell your guide:



Become an
entrepreneur.

**The hidden
plan:**



- **Anecdotes:**

- My Research Progress Committee:

“Progress needs to happen before annual Seminar, not during it.”



PhD 1st year – Dark Moments

- What to do is still not clear.
- To jump into an NGO or not to jump.

Ph.D 2nd year – Art of Living

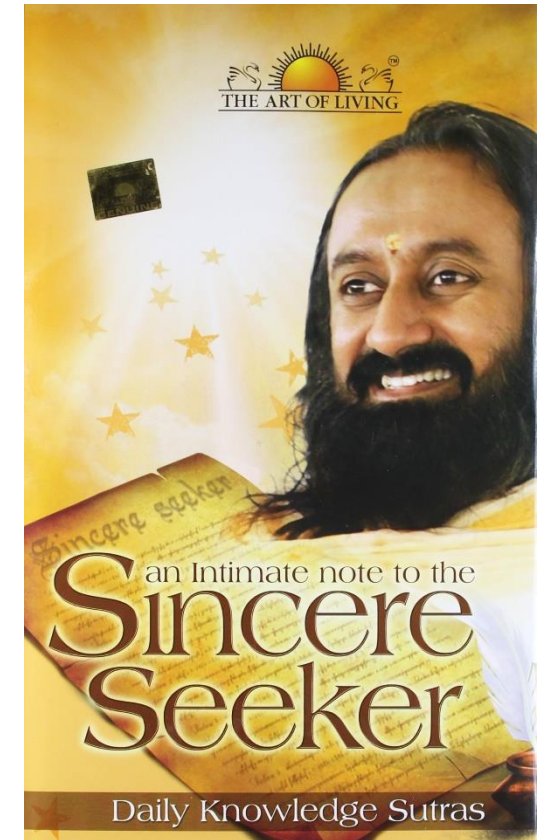
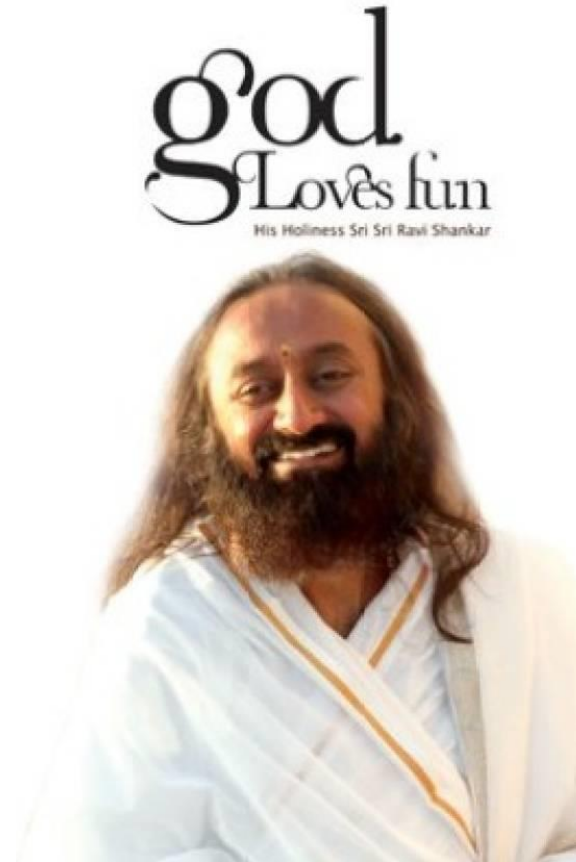
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Ph.D 2nd year – Art of Living

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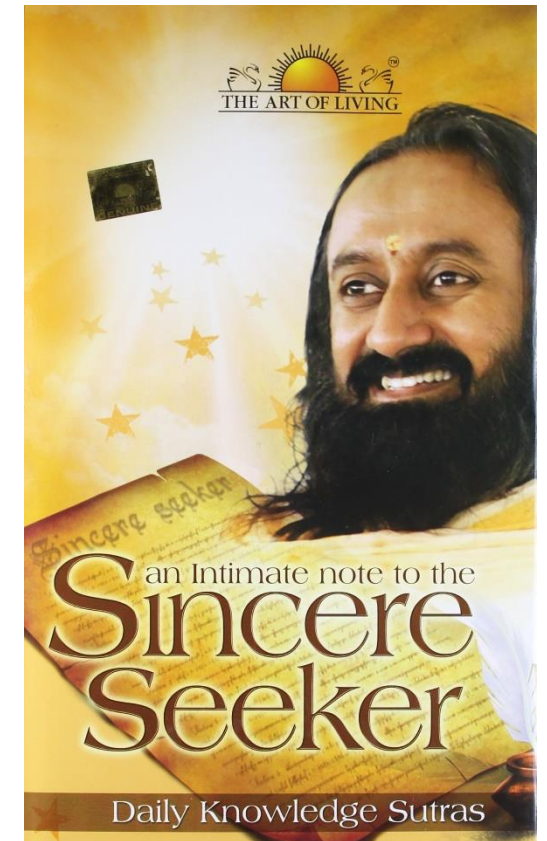
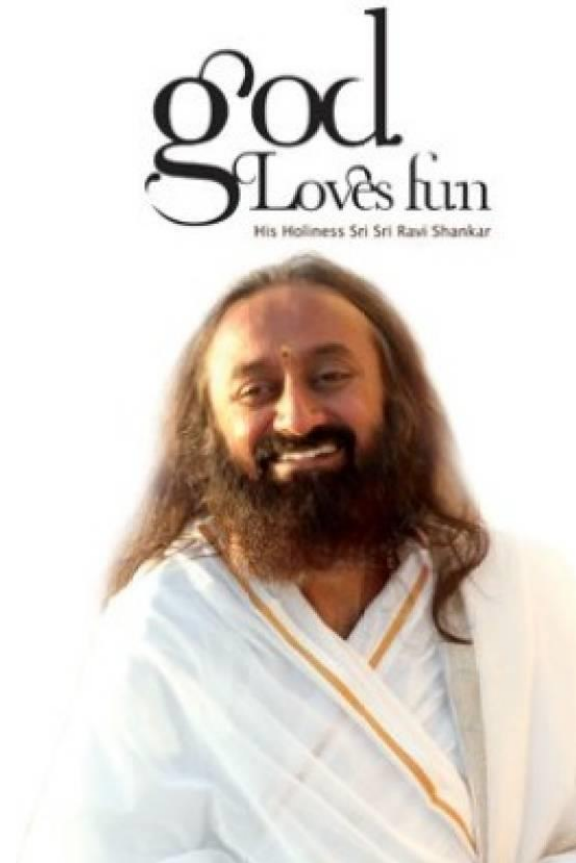
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 - Read - Osho, Sri Sri, others.
 - Read – Gita, Patanjali Yoga sutras, ...
 - Read – teachings of Jesus, Buddha, Sufis.
- Do – Courses from Art of Living.
- More work with Edu NGOs.



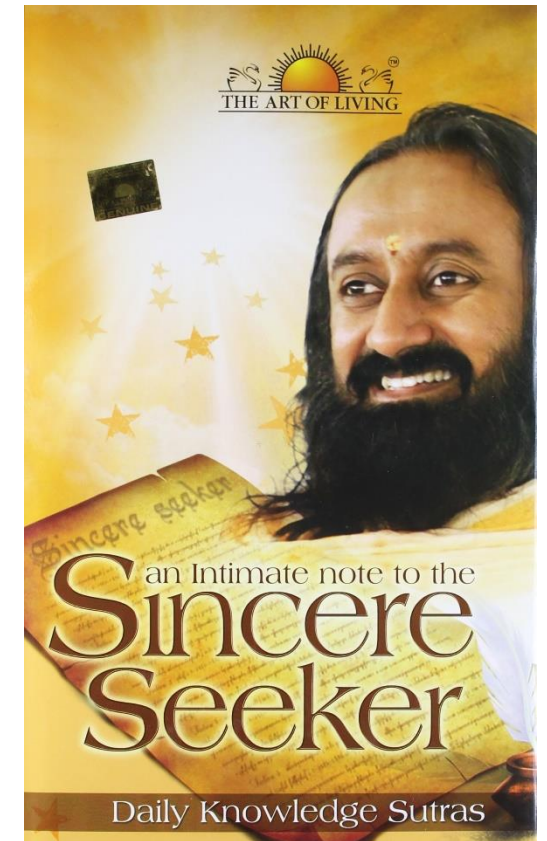
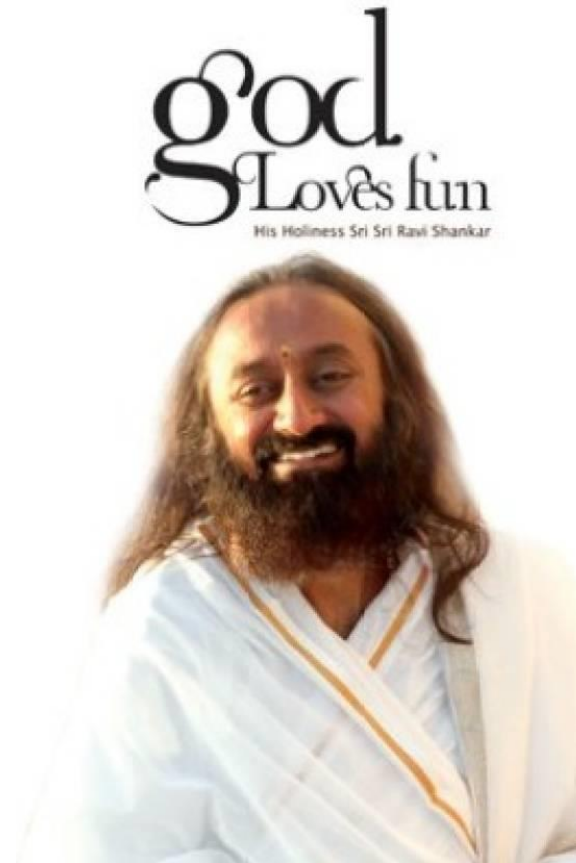
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 - PhD moves along.
 - More clarity on what to do in life.
 - **Values – Respect everyone; Dispassion, ..**



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Immersion: [Jnana yoga](#), [Karma yoga](#), [Bhakti yoga](#).

PhD 2nd year – Scenic route





PhD 2nd year – Scenic route

- Approach to finding answers, so far:



PhD 2nd year – Scenic route

- **Approach to finding answers, so far:**
 - Gather knowledge from external sources.
 - Determine what should I do.



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- Approach is not working for me now.





PhD 2nd year – Scenic route

- **Approach to finding answers, so far:**
 - Gather knowledge from external sources.
 - Determine what should I do.
- Approach is not working for me now.
- **New approach, going inwards:**
 - Who am I? What makes me do things?
 - Introspection, meditation.





PhD 2nd year – Dark Moments

- How to balance spiritual journey with worldly transactions?
- Still not entirely clear, still thinking.



Reflection Spot



Reflection Spot

Can you recall my [tagline](#) from my webpage? Which of the following is it?

1. IDP in Educational Technology.
2. 2+2 philosophy.
3. Anandamayi Chaitanyamayi Satyamayi Parame.

pause



write your answers



play





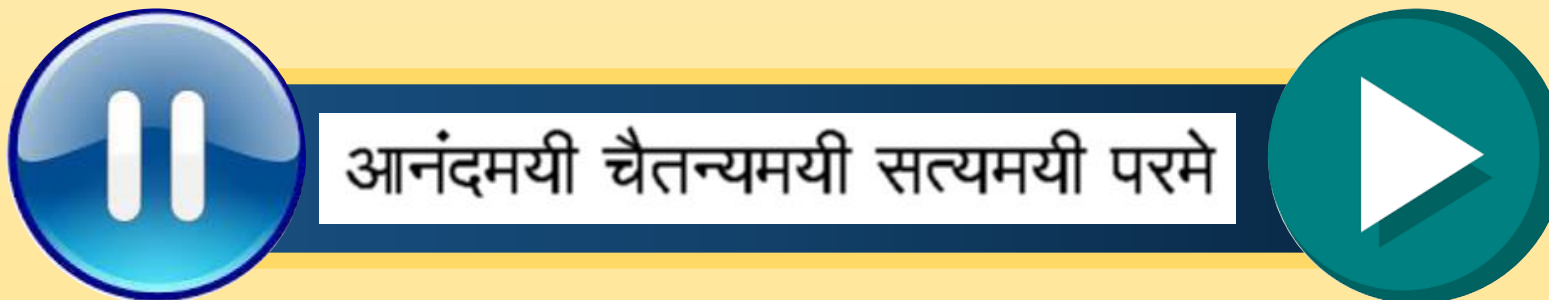
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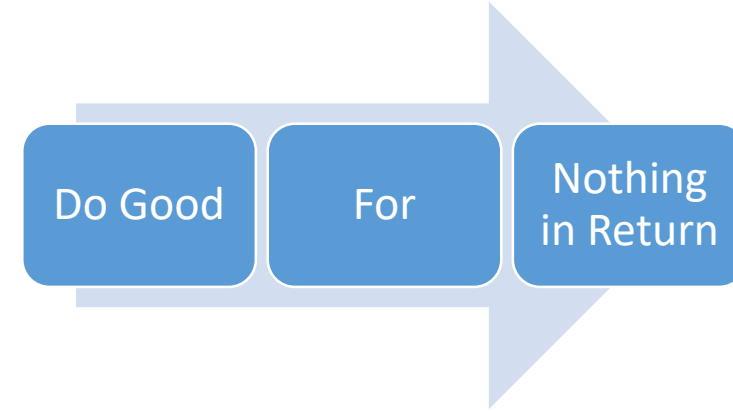
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 - Called it ‘Good-for-Nothing’ Society.
 - Identified like-minded colleagues.
 - Wrote a manifesto; Opened a bank account.

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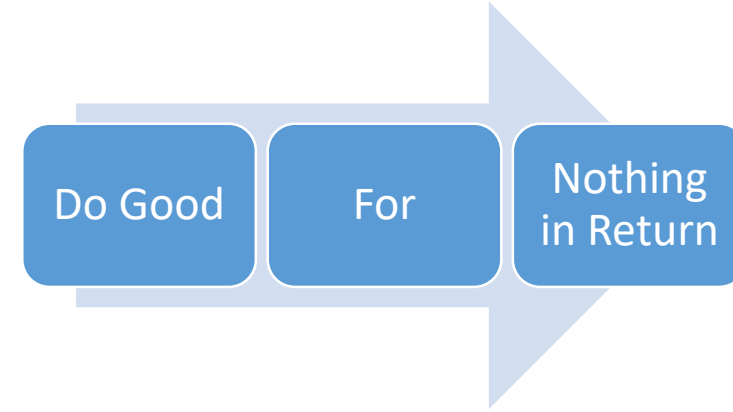
Do Good

For

Nothing
in Return

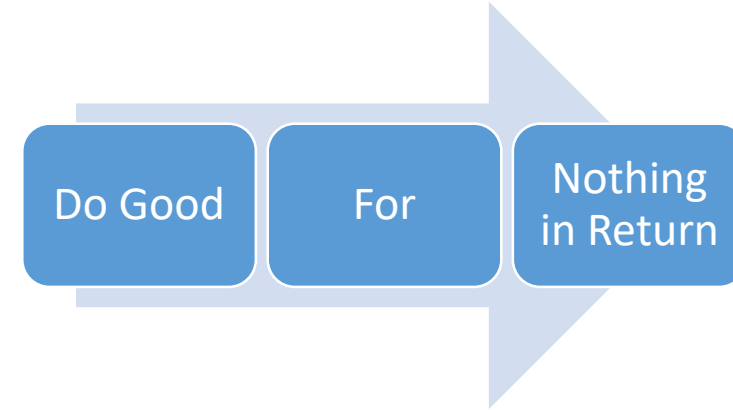
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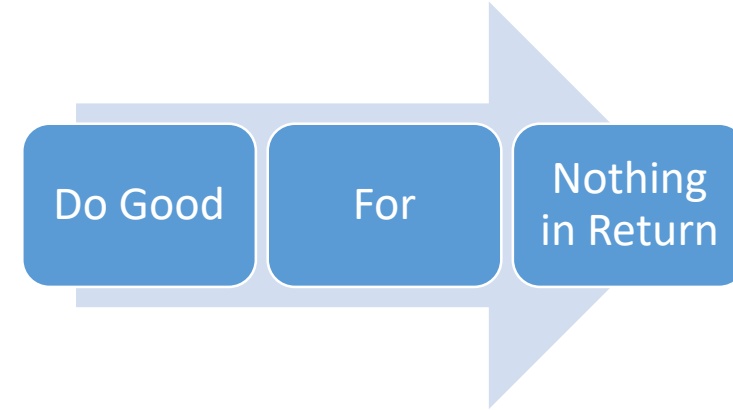
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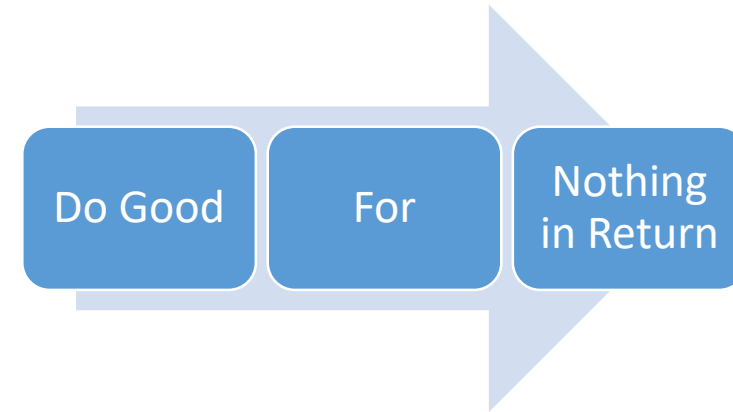
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 - Service is not an action, but an attitude.



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Digression:
Found another organization today with the same name - GoodForNothing.com

GFN – Scenic route





GFN – Scenic route

The GFN Society

The Good-For-Nothing (GFN) society, is a way in which the common man can make a difference. It is made up of the *GFN faith, organization, attitude and the GFN work.*

The GFN faith

GFN does not believe in always taking the global view. The global view leads mostly only to theorizing and rarely to action. GFN directly attacks the problem at hand in a local scenario. If GFN sees a child living on the roads, it does not bother itself by musing on the fate of all the destitute children in the world. It just takes that one child off the road and puts it into a home.

GFN has faith that there are people all over the world, doing the same. When there are sufficient people, all the children will be off the roads. Eventually small local actions will produce a global reaction.

GFN – Philosophy



GFN – Philosophy



To summarize the Good-For-Nothing (GFN) philosophy in three sentences :

Most people are GOOD.

Ordinary individuals CAN make a difference.

None of us is as strong as ALL of us.

To summarize the GFN philosophy in three words: “GOOD-FOR-NOTHING”.

Do “good” work and expect “nothing” in return. In the best case, something will come of it.

In the worst case, nothing. Hope for the best, accept the worst and *do something*.

The power of GFN for addressing global issues and effecting changes, lies in the number of strongly and not-so-strongly committed common men who identify with it.

Alone, we can't do much. Together, we can change the world.

For this reason, this article belongs all common men and has no copyrights. I am just a good-for-nothing you see, and this is my two bits for whatever it counts.

GFN - MOU



GFN -

Memorandum of Understanding

We are group of people interested in social and environmental causes, and would like to do some work in these areas. For this purpose, we are pooling in some money from our own earnings, and are opening a joint account, to be operated by [REDACTED] and Sridhar Iyer.

We have faith and trust amongst each other and have no doubts regarding the integrity of any of us. In any case, with respect to the operation of the account, none of us will take any legal action against anyone else.

We will be maintaining accounts of the money received and spent, but are not registering ourselves as any organization, since for the present, we would like to work informally, free of the complete legal procedures. Nevertheless, we expressly undertake not to get involved in any unlawful activities. We are also not involving ourselves in any transactions that deal with foreign exchange.

If for any reason, we would like to dissolve the organization, we will close this account and the remaining money will be given to some existing NGO.

We do not subscribe to any particular political or religious ideology and have no discrimination on the basis of religion, caste or creed.



GFN News



GFN News

Activities Completed 1. Posters for increasing environmental awareness in IIT (D1r, Jan 95).

2. New year gifts to staff canteen workers (D1r, Jan 95).
(D1r comprises of current + ex-residents + deserters of H 8, D-1-R wing)
3. Experimental sales of jute sacks to pavement dwellers (subbu,sri, Jan 95).
Around 5-10 gunny bags that are used for storage in grain shops were purchased and sold to roadside construction workers at subsidized rates. These are used by them in lieu of blankets for cold protection. Interesting finding was that just as we dont want to give them free, they also dont want to get them free. Asking them if they want the sacks only makes them suspicious, a direct sales approach is far better.
4. Talk by Victor (VOICE) (Feb 95).
VOICE (Voluntary Organization In Community Enterprise), works towards the overall education of children who live and work on the streets and railway platforms in Bombay. Most teaching programs are held on railway platforms (Churchgate, Dadar, Vile Parle, Andheri etc). VOICE was established in 1991 by Victor Bansiwari and presently caters to 350 children in the age group of 4-17 yrs. The purpose of his visit was to see what support can we provide to him. Some ideas were generated during the talk and are being followed up.

Ongoing Work 1. Tutoring of some campus school children (all, Pre-1995).

2. Classes for spoken english for adults (chidu,vaz, Jan 95).
3. Teaching at Snehasadan, a home for homeless children (subbu,sri, Jan 95).
4. Database of NGOs and forum for interaction (vivek,sri, Jan 95).
5. Employment of Jagan for clearing trash from roads in IIT (sohoni, Jan 95).
6. Putting up dustbins in IIT (D1r, Feb 95).
7. Survey, report and solutions for water conservation in IIT (D1r, Feb 95).
8. Computerization for Snehasadan (vaz vernon, Feb 95).
9. Computerization for VOICE (raju, Feb 95).
Voluntary Organizations are extremely understaffed and have large amounts of data to be processed, various queries to be answered etc. Office automation, accounting packages, and DBMS is necessary to free them for more productive tasks.
10. Setting up of screen printing for VOICE (waghulde, Feb 95).
11. Generation of revenue thru wildlife bags, T-shirts (waghulde, Feb 95).

Upcoming Activities 1. Awareness posters for water conservation, Collage/Photo competition.

2. Outing for children of VOICE in IIT.
3. Putting up of bamboo dustbins.
4. Employment of plumber for fixing leaking taps.
5. Planting of trees.



GFN News

Mar 95

GFN News

No. 2

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 5. Planting of trees.



Tribute:

[U. Subbaraju](#)

1965 - 2017

IITB - M Tech '88, Ph D '96



Tribute:
U. Subbaraju

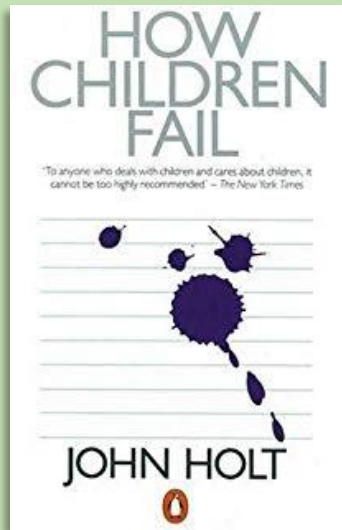
1965 - 2017

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GFN News

Books:
How children fail;
Toto chan; ... others



Mar 95	GFN News	No. 2
Activities Completed		
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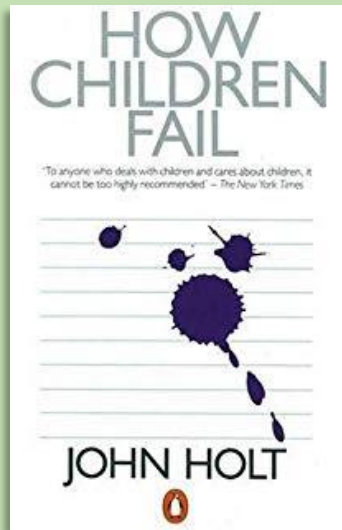
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See website:
[ArvindGupta](#)
for pdf versions.

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PhD 3rd year – Scenic route





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- **GFN:**
 - Founders could not converge on what-how.



PhD 3rd year – Scenic route

- GFN:
 - Founders could not converge on what-how.
 - It became a personal philosophy for me.
 - Service is not an action, but an attitude.



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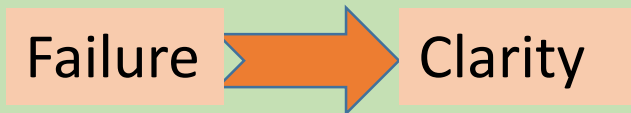


Driver: Three Questions



PhD 3rd year – Scenic route

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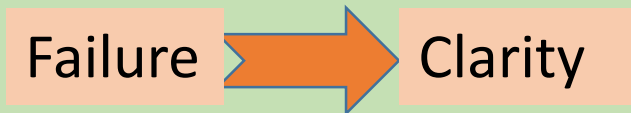


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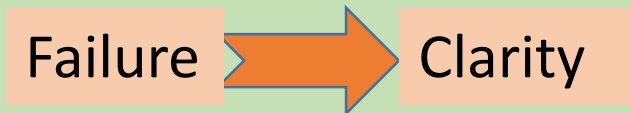
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- Epiphany (age 27):

- What should I do with my life?
- Do Service - Work for the next generation of students.
 - You don't have to go somewhere to do something meaningful.
 - You can be useful in CS itself, why abandon it?



Driver: Three Questions



PhD 3rd year – Dark Moments

- Where is my thesis going?
- Is it good enough?

Ph.D 4th and 5th years – Work and Thesis

- **Goal:** Finish PhD, Seek higher Truths.

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 - Meditate regularly.



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- **Goal:** Finish PhD, Seek higher Truths.
- **Approach:**
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 - *Topic: Analysis of distributed programs.*
 - Prof. S. Ramesh was my guide.
 - Meditate regularly.
- **Outcome:**
 - PhD completed. 😊
 - Got lucky – IIT Guwahati was started.
 - Started work as a faculty in Jan 1998.







Post-PhD – Dark Moments

- Am I good enough to be a faculty?

Sequel yet to be produced



Trailer:
What is -
Ikigai
2+2 philosophy

Reflection – Transfer of learning from Trekking



Reflection – Transfer of learning from Trekking

- **Trekking philosophy:**
 - Reaching the top was not a goal.
 - Enjoying the route was important.
 - Appreciate nature, silence, reflection.



Reflection – Transfer of learning from Trekking

- **Trekking philosophy:**
 - Reaching the top was not a goal.
 - Enjoying the route was important.
 - Appreciate nature, silence, reflection.
- **Transfer:**
 - Work towards a goal.
 - don't fixate on a predefined outcome.
 - Keep going one step at a time.
 - Accept situations and revise goals.
 - Always have fun along the way.



Reflection – Key skills learned from

Trekking:

Computer Science:

Volleyball:

NGOs:

Reflection – Key skills learned from

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Computer Science:

Volleyball:

- Dedication to regular practice.
- Play for the point, not the score.
- Once done, it was a game.

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- Rigor as well as Applied focus.
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Map real-world problems in CS terms.

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NGOs:

- Multi-disciplinary skills required to solve real-world problem.
- Keep going, learn from failures.

Reflection – How's my life today?

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- I have done so much of travel, trekking, reading, 'enjoying', - that I am satisfied.

SATISFIED



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Reflection – How's my life today?

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- Now, **Work = Fun = Work.**
- But, I still have ups and downs.

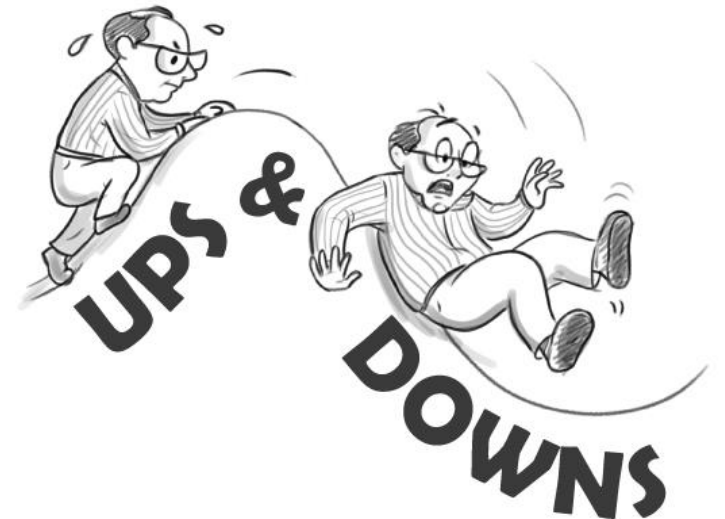
SATISFIED



Reflection – How's my life today?

- I have done so much of travel, trekking, reading, 'enjoying', - that I am satisfied.
- Now, **Work = Fun = Work.**
- But, I still have ups and downs.
- Getting overwhelmed is a trigger for **solitude, meditation, reflection, prioritization, ...**
and onto the next cycle / level.

SATISFIED



Reflection – How do I maintain perspective?

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When I begin to feel:

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When I begin to feel:

- Important →

Reflection – How do I maintain perspective?

When I begin to feel:

- Important → I remember scale.



Reflection – How do I maintain perspective?

When I begin to feel:

- Overwhelmed →

Reflection – How do I maintain perspective?

When I begin to feel:

- Overwhelmed → Be kind to yourself.



Reflection – How do I maintain perspective?

When I begin to feel:

Lethargic →

Reflection – How do I maintain perspective?

When I begin to feel:

Lethargic → Talk to students.



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Reflection – Value of looking back

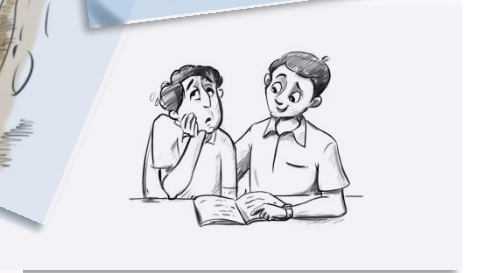
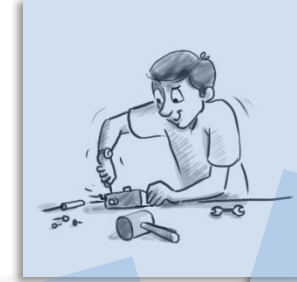
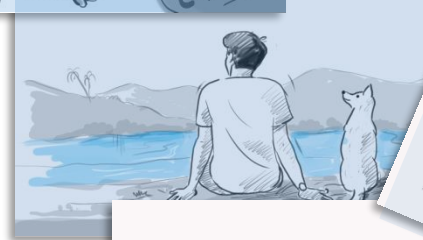
Reflection – Value of looking back

- Usually, I don't have much memory for past events.
 - I mostly look ahead.



Reflection – Value of looking back

- Usually, I don't have much memory for past events.
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- However, this exercise has been useful.
 - see how various events have contributed to me being the person I am today.

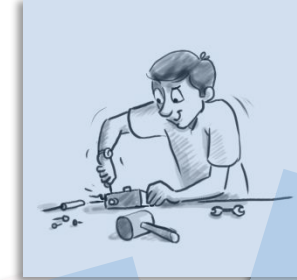
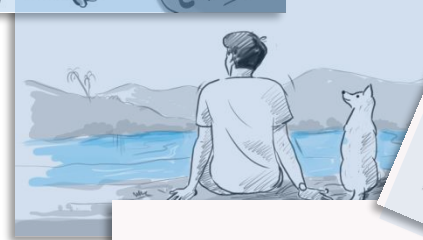


Reflection – Value of looking back

- Usually, I don't have much memory for past events.
 - I mostly look ahead.

- However, this exercise has been useful.
 - see how various events have contributed to me being the person I am today.

- As I thought about a phase in my life, I was able to recall the really important events in that phase and view them dispassionately.



Reflection - On making this story

Reflection - On making this story

- Had fun:

Exercising creativity Conceptualizing, detailing, finding images, so on.



Reflection - On making this story

- **Process:** Ideate, Create, Refine.
 - Broad level - Planning; Detail level - Tinkering.

The screenshot shows a presentation slide with a dark blue header containing the text "Computer Masti LEVEL VI". Below the header is a yellow box labeled "Thinking skills" with an illustration of a cartoon character and a person. To the right is a brown box labeled "Concept" containing the text "Create presentation" and a list of three stages: "Stage 1: Plan: Decide an outline for the presentation.", "Stage 2: Execute: Create the slides.", and "Stage 3: Impress: Verify content, add visual effects and practice."



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Computer Masti VI LEVEL VI

Thinking skills

Concept

Create presentation

Creating presentations primarily involves 3 main stages:
Stage 1: **Plan:** Decide an outline for the presentation.
Stage 2: **Execute:** Create the slides.
Stage 3: **Impress:** Verify content, add visual effects and practice.



Reflection - On making this story

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- Storyboarding:

Reflection - On making this story

- **Storyboarding:**
 - 1500 minutes over one week, (including unstructured thinking time).
 - 1000 minutes from concept to product - cycle1.
 - Testing with 1 user: *“Don’t change anything”*.
 - 500 minutes for refinement – cycle2.

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[Strong Pedagogy + Simple Technology]

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- **Choice of technology:**

- Content, Pedagogy, and Technology, need to be decided, so chose –

[Strong Pedagogy + Simple Technology]

trumps

[Sophisticated Technology + Weak Pedagogy]

Reflection – Recommendations to audience

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- Now that you have watched/heard the story once, do a second pass.
 - You may notice more details.



Reflection – Recommendations to audience

- Now that you have watched/heard the story once, do a second pass.
 - You may notice more details.
- Read it like a thought provoking book. Read some, reflect some, discuss some.
 - If any phase strike a chord in you, discuss with peers/me, separately.



Reflection – Recommendations to audience

- Now that you have watched/heard the story once, do a second pass.
 - You may notice more details.
- Read it like a thought provoking book. Read some, reflect some, discuss some.
 - If any phase strike a chord in you, discuss with peers/me, separately.
- Find your own magic potion.
 - May the Force be with you!



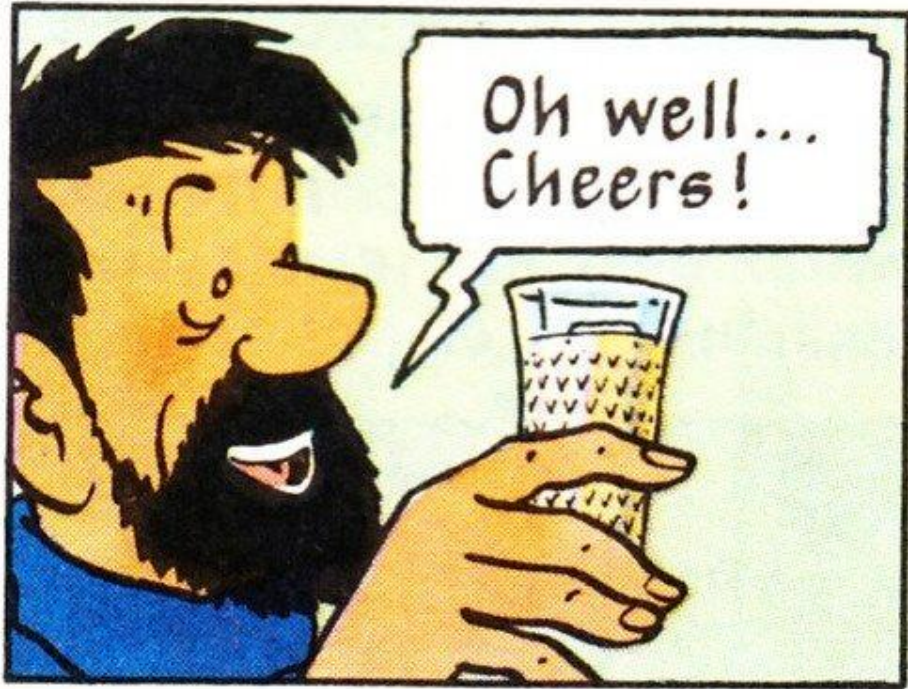


LbD: Learning by Doing

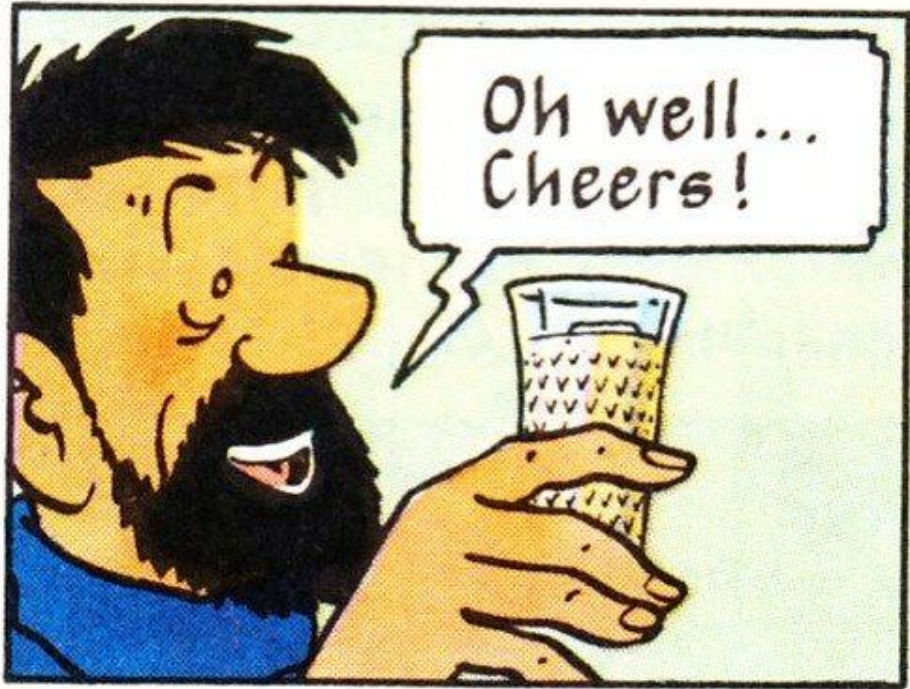
1. Choose your favorite extra-curricular activity –
 - Identify the learning that you have transferred from that activity to other domains, or to life in general.
2. Volunteer to be a focus person.
 - The exercise of creating such a talk itself brings more clarity on where are you, how did you get here, where do you want to go, ...

Reflection – Overall

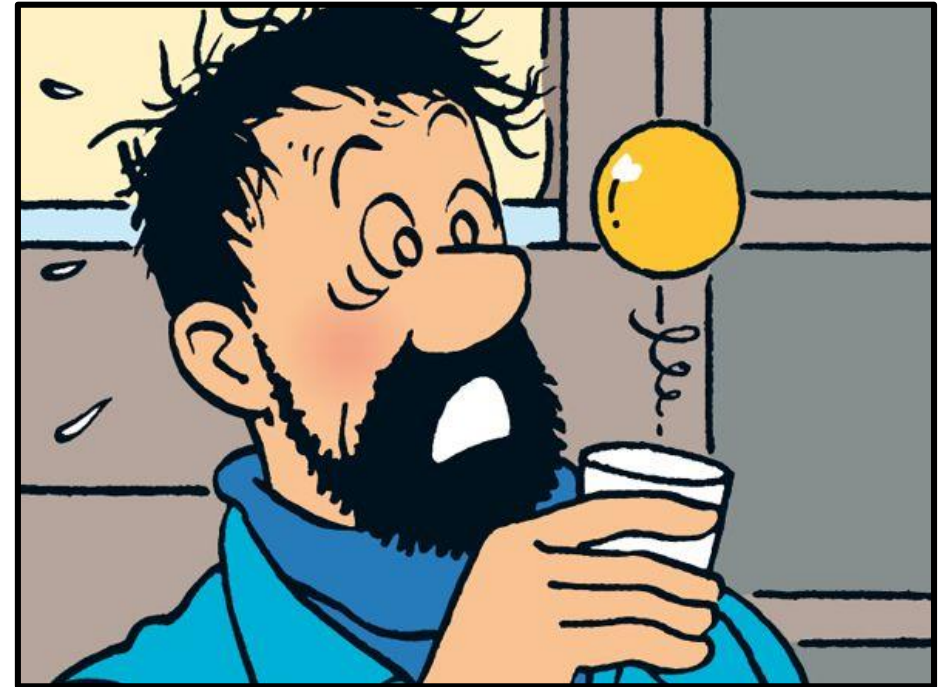
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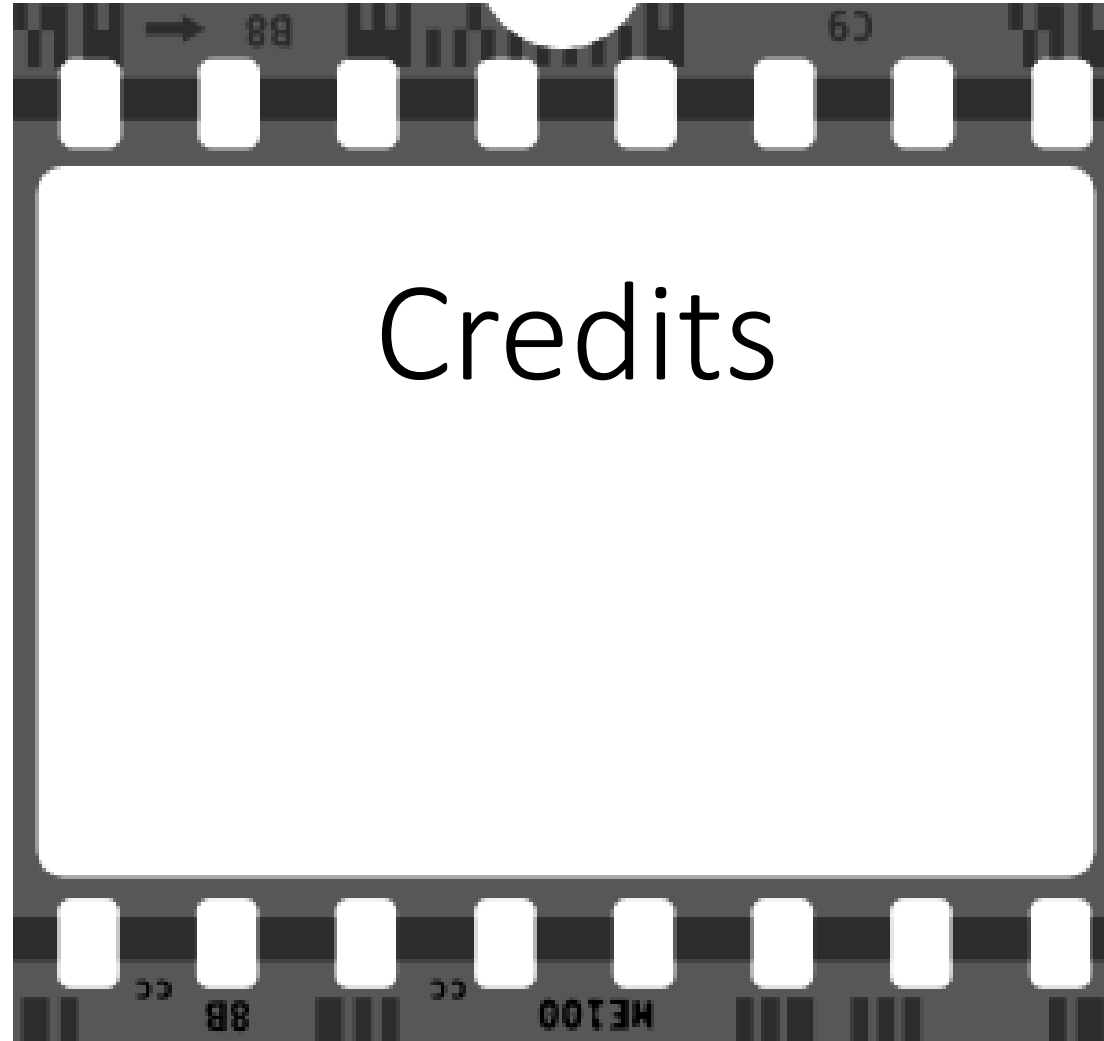


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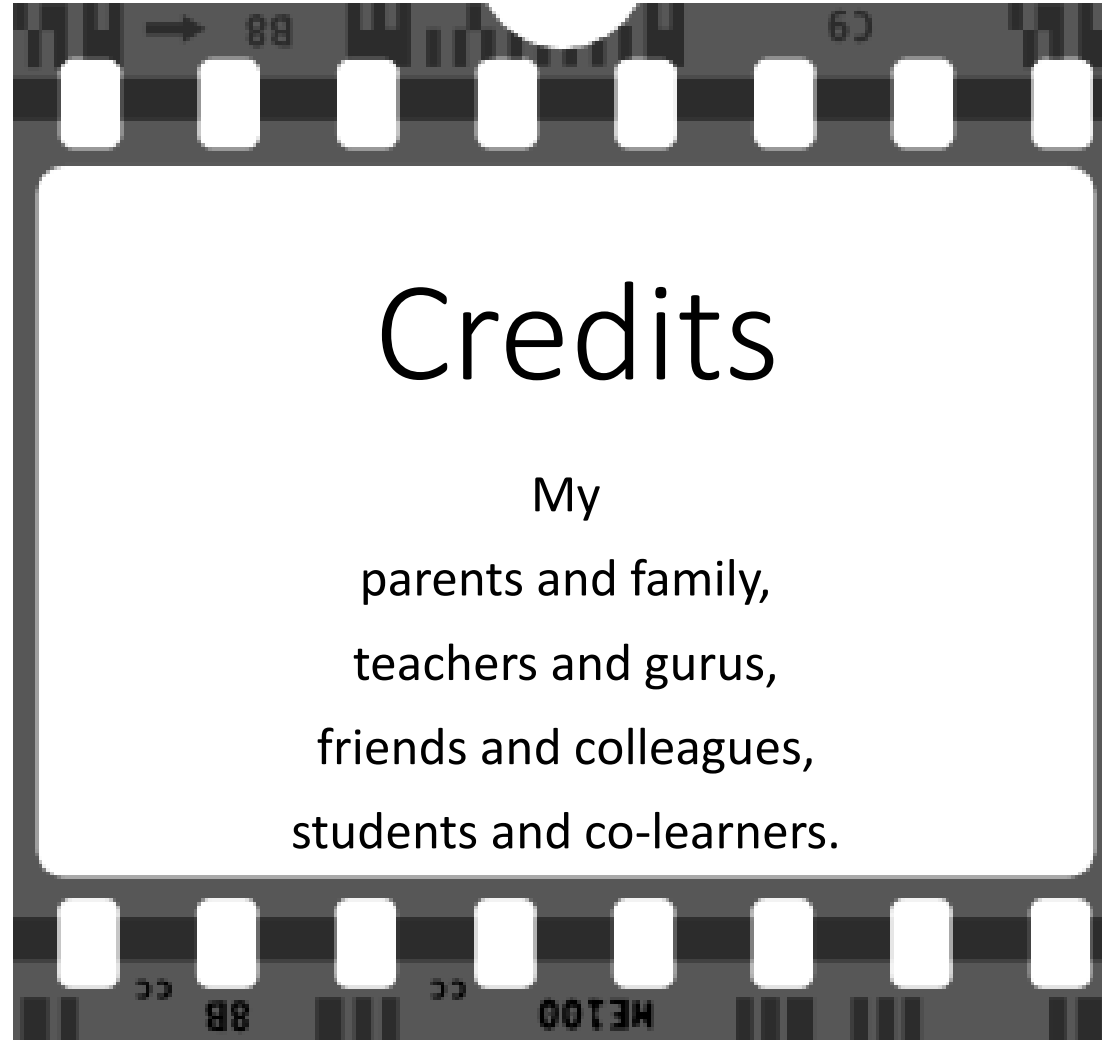
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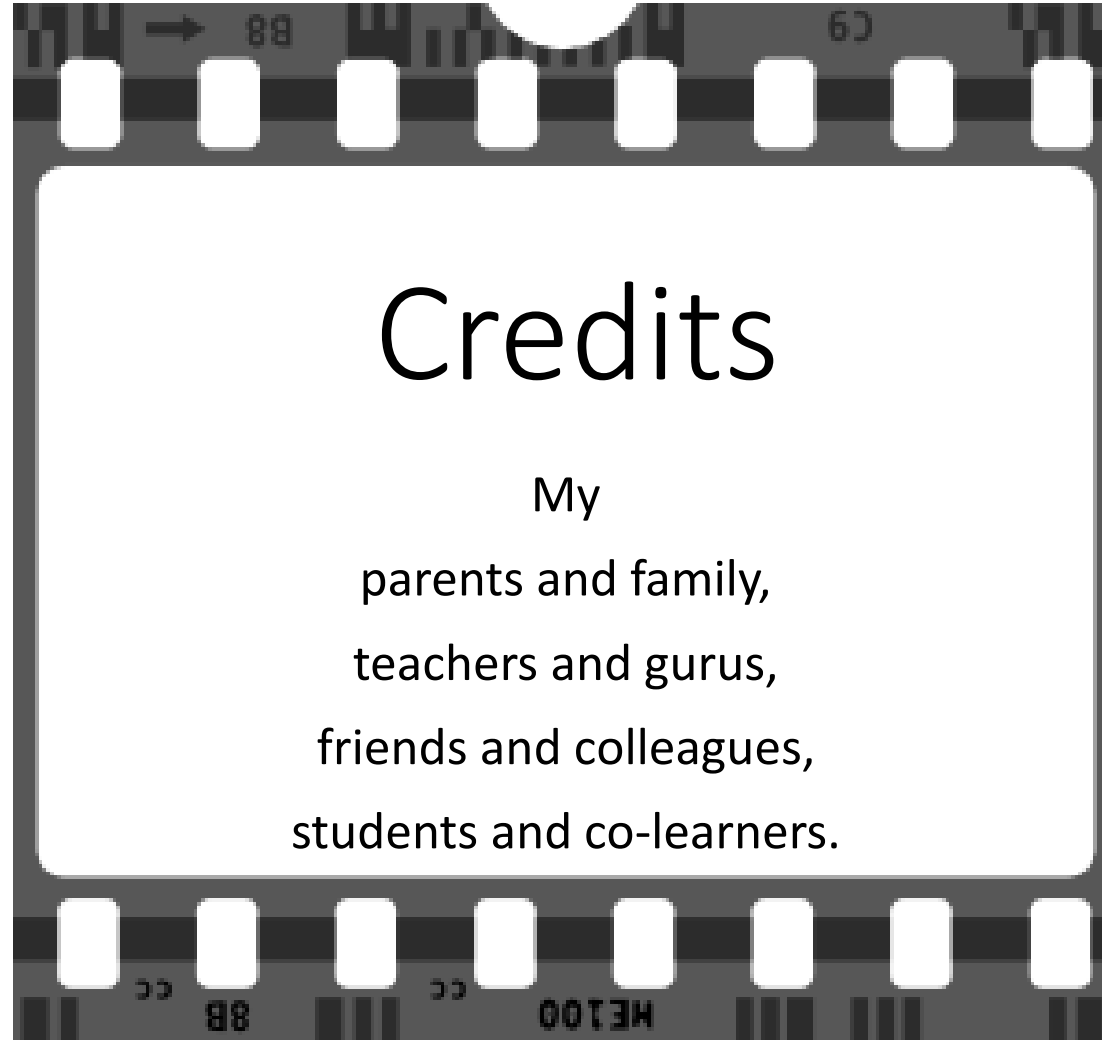




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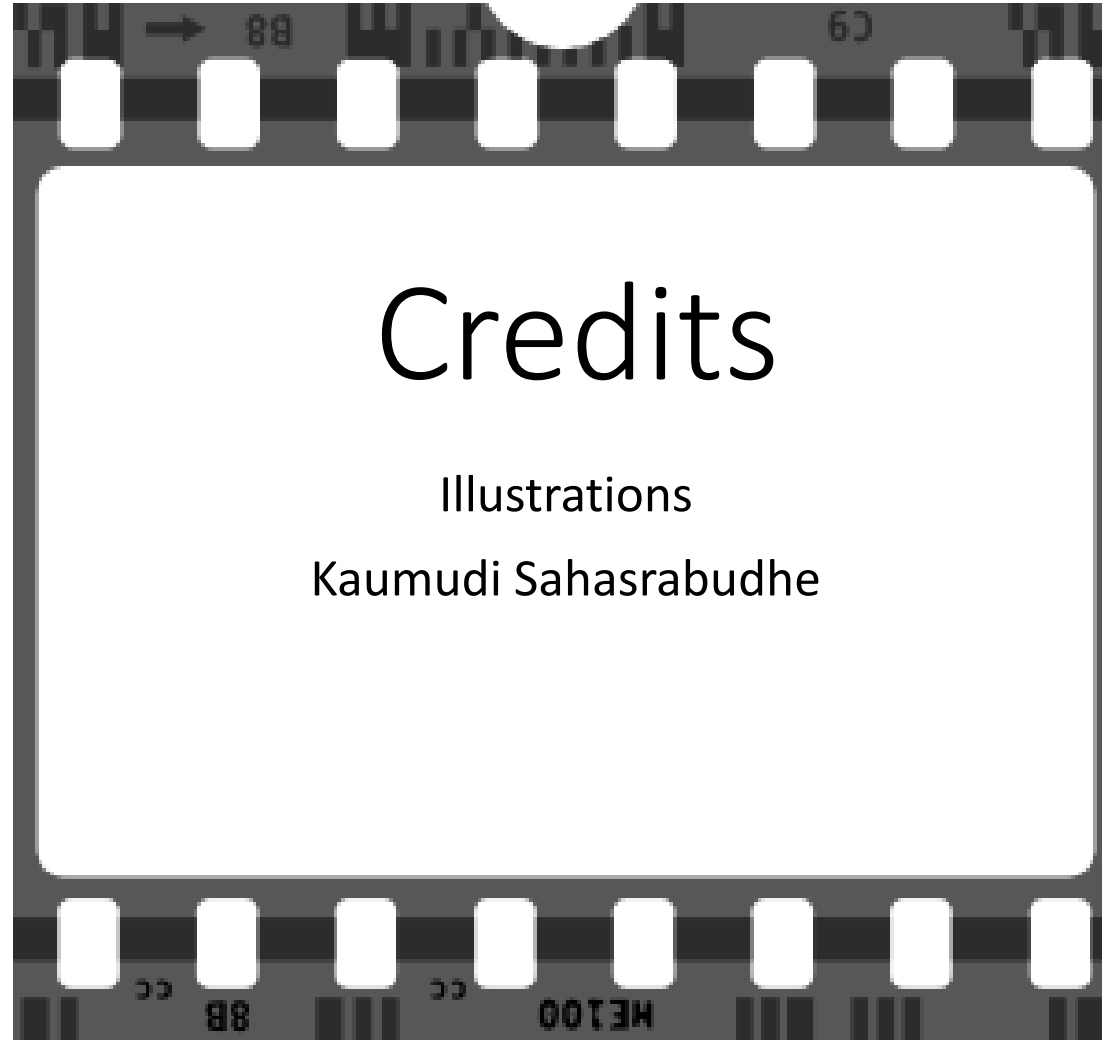


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Extra Slides

- Introduction to Leisure LxI.

What is Leisure LxI series?

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- Here, the Lxl concept is adapted for face-to-face interactions.

‘What’ and ‘Why’ of Leisure LxI

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- **What:** LxI concept adapted for face-to-face interactions on *topics of philosophical and general interest*.

'What' and 'Why' of Leisure LxI

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 - The goal is to enable learners' development as reflective thinkers, by learning from each other, without pressure, almost as a leisure activity.

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- **Why:** Education needs to be situated in the socio-cultural context.

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 - The goal is to enable learners' development as reflective thinkers, by learning from each other, without pressure, almost as a leisure activity.
- **Why:** Education needs to be situated in the socio-cultural context.
 - We need to pay sufficient attention to the HSS aspects of our students' growth. While sporadic teacher-student conversations, student-student conversations, and debates has ensured that growth along this dimension is non-zero, we need to consider discussing philosophical issues as an important activity in EdTech.

'How' of Leisure LxI

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- **Format:** Focus person or focus question.

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 - **Diversity** in choice of focus person is desirable.
 - Focus question - Each person in the audience responds to the focus question from their own personal experience. Then, we react to each others' responses.

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- Followed by individual Reflection.

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- (LxT (Learning eXtension Trajectory) – How similar and different are Leisure LxI meetings from [support groups](#). See [safe space](#) vs [safe space](#) and this [debate](#)).

Thank you for listening

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