unnoticed Heroes. Sometimes we have the fortune of encountering them. They leave a lasting imprint on our life. They inspire us. It is the story of people who have decided to become complete human beings. They are committed to spread perfumes of their courage and compassion, goodness and excellence in their respective field, a spirit of creativity in accomplishing their mission, be it big or small, to the best of their ability.

The need of the hour

You are in a professional college. Remember, “...the most dangerous way to approach college is with the idea that all you need to do is pay your dues and get your degree” (Patrick Combs). While it is true that getting a degree, acquiring knowledge, developing of skills, enhancement of employability and competencies are very important, we cannot underestimate the importance of value based education. Today we often witness several tensions and conflicts in every part of our country. Self-centeredness and indifference seem to replace our wonderful culture of selfless service. Lack of ethical and moral values make us less human. Respect and reverence for elders, self-discipline and integrity which has been part of our beautiful culture seem to be disappearing. Our college is committed to make you dependable (trustworthy, loyal, faithful, reliable, responsible etc.) human beings, therefore, you should pay great attention to a value-based life. As today’s students are tomorrow’s leaders, you should own responsibility to build your future on solid values. Therefore, as leaders of tomorrow learn to become service-oriented, sensitive and responsible, to the society where you live. Besides, as Bosconians you also have your code of ethics and behavioural guidelines, which is your identity-kit, that you need to make part of your life.

I would like to suggest some guidelines which could help you to become proud Bosconians and of course, complete human beings.

• As a young adult be responsible for your life and take control of your life and actions. Commit yourself to become all rounded, fulfilling the great plan God has for you.

• Be a person of integrity and let your life be characterized by harmonious living and God-orientation. Have the courage to stand by the values you believe in and to go against the current. Do not allow yourself be led by mob behavior.

• Keep your reputation and integrity intact by focusing on doing what is right and best. Avoid acting at the spur of the moment or taking rash decisions.

• Make steady progress by focusing on what is really essential. Keep your eyes constantly on your goal. Be highly motivated in everything that you do.

• Watch your habits. Developing a few bad habits is often the start of a downward spiral that can have devastating long term consequences.

• Make personal changes when necessary. Be decisive when things go tough. Self-discipline plays a big role in achieving your goal in life.

• Be committed in the pursuit of excellence, a strong drive and tremendous work ethic. It takes a positive mind set, great confidence, clear focus, above all a burning, passionate desire to excel.

• Think Big! Creating a life of significance starts with a dream. A vision of what you want and why you want it. Leading an adventurous life and fully exploring your capacity requires getting out of your comfort zone.

• Every choice you make counts. In the puzzle of life, every piece affects the next. Even the smallest action or inaction will change how a part of your life turns out. Everything you do, or don’t do, either adds to your well being or takes away from it.

• Do not let yourself be taken in by a future of empty promises. The springtime of your youthful life cannot be wasted on strikes, arrogance, unbridled freedom and negative influence. Open your life to all that is good, beautiful, true, noble and you will feel energized, enthusiastic, passionate and daring to face future and make your life worthwhile.

Remember, time is like a river. You cannot touch the same water twice, because the flow that has passed will never pass again. So make the best of every moment of your life.

Grasp every opportunity that comes your way and attain “life in its fullness”.

thoughts for a fuller life

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Growing into a complete human being – this is very important for every person, much more for an educated person. Whether you like it or not, you will grow into an adult. All that you need to do for it is to survive. Becoming an adult is nothing special – growth is routine. It happens naturally.

But there is another growth that all human beings should undergo. You need to become a complete human being. It does not consist in becoming an adult, putting on weight or thinning oneself, nor does it consist in getting degrees and titles. You can have all these and yet you can still remain childish and immature. Growing is automatic, growing up is not. Learning and deciding to become a complete human being is a responsibility and a decision that you need to make consciously.

The Miracle of Personal Development

If you want to be a complete human being, learn this lesson well: learn to work harder on yourself than you do on your job. Working on one’s own personal development and maturity is the most challenging assignment of all. This assignment lasts a lifetime.

What you become is far more important than what you get. The important question that you need to ask daily is not, “What am I getting?” Instead, you should ask, “What am I becoming?” Getting and becoming are two sides of the same coin. What you become directly influences what you get. Think of it this way: Most of what you have today you have attracted by being the person you are today. There is something great and wonderful in human nature. Whatever might have been our past, we can always alter and become the person we really want to become. We have that freedom to choose. It’s indeed a great gift given to us by God.

Commitment to Holistic Education

The ultimate aim of education in a Don Bosco Institution is to form young people into complete human beings, in other words, to give them holistic education. That was what Don Bosco wanted. It is true that education must enable you to equip yourself with adequate knowledge and excellent technological proficiency, so that you may function with clarity and efficiency in this fast changing competitive world. But a far more important purpose than this is that you grow up into a complete human being. These two must go together. This is the essence in education – that as you grow in age, you should also be well established in goodness both outwardly and inwardly. You should carefully cultivate a global outlook, a love for nature and environment, concern for fellow human beings. You should also see that as you grow up physically you need to nurture your intellectual and esthetical sensibilities, foster socially desirable moral values and cherish the deeper dimension of your spiritual growth. If these things are over-looked, no matter how many degrees you acquire, how rich and influential you become, how competent you seem to be, you are not becoming the person you are meant to be - a complete human being. According to J. Krishnamurti: “The highest function of education is to bring about an integrated individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole”.

The tragic air-crash in Mangalore on May 22, 2010 highlighted some of the heroes of the day, who manifested their wonderful human qualities. With courage and compassion they reached out to the victims and their families forgetting self. They were simple people with few academic qualifications but with a heroic degree of human touch. Such people occasionally shine. If these things are over-looked, no matter how many degrees you acquire, how rich and influential you become, how competent you seem to be, you are not becoming the person you are meant to be - a complete human being. According to J. Krishnamurti: “The highest function of education is to bring about an integrated individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole”.

Ordinary Life Extraordinarily Lived

“Last Sunday, my wife and kid and I had to travel to Andheri from Bandra. When I waved at a passing auto rickshaw, little did I expect that this ride would be different.

As we set off, my eyes fell on a few magazines (kept in an aircraft style pouch) behind the driver’s back rest. I looked in front and there was a small TV. The driver had put on the Doordarshan channel. My wife and I looked at each other with disbelief and amusement. In front of me was a small first-aid box with cotton, dettol and some medicines. This was enough for me to realize that I was in a special vehicle. Then I looked around again, and discovered more – there was a radio, fire extinguisher, wall clock, calendar, and pictures and symbols of all faiths – from Islam and Christianity to Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. There were also pictures of the heroes of 26/11 – Kamte, Salaskar, Karkare and Unnikrishnan. I realized that not only my vehicle, but also my driver was special!

I started chatting with him and the initial sense of ridicule and disbelief gradually diminished. I gathered that he had been driving an auto rickshaw for the past 8-9 years; he had lost his job when his employer’s plastic company was shut down. He had two school-going children, and he drove from 8 in the morning till 10 at night. No break unless he was unwell...

We realized that we had come across a man who represents Mumbai’s spirit of work, the spirit of travel and the spirit of excelling in life. I asked him whether he does anything else as I figured that he did not have too much spare time. He said that he goes to an old age home for women in Andheri once a week or whenever he has some extra income, where he donates tooth brushes, soap, hair oil, and other items of daily use. He pointed out to a painted message below the meter that read: “25% discount on metered fare for the handicapped. Free rides for blind passengers up to Rs 50/.” He also said that his auto was mentioned on Radio Mirchi twice by the station RJs. The Marathi Press in Mumbai knew about him and has written a few pieces on him and his vehicle.

My wife and I were struck with awe. The man was a HERO! A Hero who deserves all our respect. I know that my son, once he grows up, will realize that we have met a genuine hero. He has put questions to me such as why should we help other people? I will keep this incident alive in his memory.

Our journey came to an end; 45 minutes of a lesson in humility, selflessness and of hero-worshiping. We disembarked, and all I could do was to pay him a tip that would hardly cover a free ride for a blind man. I hope, one day you too have a chance to meet Mr. Sandeep Bachhe in his auto rickshaw: MH-02-Z-8508” (Suvendu Roy).

Very inspiring experience indeed! We have many such unsung,