

HARD WORK OR TALENT? (1)

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“Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.” -Tim Notke

The majority of the world around us runs on the notions of pursuing success and accomplishments; and talent and hard work are perhaps the two favourite qualities such people are obsessed with. Add a pinch of luck and a bit of contacts, and behold: you have the four horsemen of achieving gangantuan heights in life. While the latter two might help in climbing up the ladders, talent and hard work are perhaps the core foundations required. Without these, achieving one’s dream might tend to remain just a dream.

Every other motivational speaker we see, or every other Sharma uncle we meet, give us the same exact potion of working hard and focusing on our strong sectors, i.e., our talents. But the thing with talents is, there’s no specific time limits along which we are presented with our talents on a silver platter. People recognize and discover them throughout their life. It’s a journey with no fixed destination. And while these talents may come into fruition after a certain period of time of self-observation and introspection, hard work, on the other hand, is a sure shot to success. There’s no alternative in this world to hustling. Be it a kindergarten kid learning multiplication tables, or a world class boxer preparing for the biggest bout of his life, hard work and resilience is always the key.

People who might seem to not possess as much of a significant talent than others, or might not have a proper idea of their strongholds (yet), often resort to hard work as an efficient substitute. Channeling their energy into a specific direction makes up for the natural talent possessed by others. But amidst all this, the real question that arises is whether we hone our talents or focus on hard work to achieve our goals?

The biggest and perhaps the most important answer to this question lies in our perspectives and our knowledge of oneself. Talent is an inborn quality, and more often than

not, it isn't something people can just magically develop over a period of time. Talent is just like the powers of the legendary Hindu mythical character, the monkey king Hanuman. They might be dormant, but are most definitely present inside us. However, the catch is that just "having" talent doesn't do anything. We need to use and apply this talent in a right way in whatever we do and this effective application of our talents will always require hard work. One might be a prodigy in a class, but unless they actually use their brains adequately, their scorecard is going to remain empty. While possessing raw talent may provide us with an upper hand, more often than not, it might prove futile in the wrong (read: lazy) hands.

An important argument focusing on why hard work beats talent is that talent may give us a boost, but will only carry us so far. If we don't make up our mind to put in the required effort and dedication to hone our talents, we might as well have given up on our talents and with them, our hopes of achieving our dreams. Perseverance and tenacity is going to beat talent more often than we'd think. If we are fortuitous enough to have been born with a genius intellect or an exceptional athletic body and metabolism, or any other advantage for that matter, we need to use them in the right way at the right time in the right manner. The hard work comes into play at this exact moment. Any one of us can have an idea or a dream, but it takes years and years of dedication and motivation to convert that dream into a reality. One of the underrated benefits of being someone without said talents is that the intense perseverance and hard work we put into our work develops us exceptionally well, be it physical or mental. The mere thought of being an average person is like a double edged sword hanging constantly on our heads all the time. Not only does it place us in a less favourable position than the talented ones, the mental stress can come with us thinking that we're no "special" kid can be degrading for us as well. And hence to make up for all this, we put in extra hard work, maybe on scales much higher than that of the talented ones. And this extra hard work is always going to help us in the long run. All the sweat a warrior sheds in practice is all the blood he saves up in the battlefield.

An important factor to consider here is that the success, whether through talent or hard work, sometimes depends entirely on the work environment we've chosen. If a person aims to be a singer or an international level athlete, their natural talent seems to have an upper hand. Similarly, if another person desires a particular dream job, hard work would be more valuable in this case.

While there may be cases for and against both the notions, we should focus on the fact about how talent and hard work coexist in the same plane and are mutually dependent on each other. With proper dedication, hard work can lead to a significant development of the talents and skills of a person over a period of time. Similarly, talented people can never accomplish without hard work to hone their talents. An unorthodox application of talent and hard work can be seen in the ever famous fable of the race between the hare and the tortoise. While the hare possessed the raw talent of being swift, the tortoise wasn't so lucky. But we all saw how that story turned out when the "talented" hare decided to self loathe and enjoy and the tortoise continued to persevere.

The question of what's better between talent and hard work is a never-ending loop, just like the question of what came first: the chicken or the egg. Both have its arguments and counter arguments, but what matters is that we always strive to make a conscious effort to use our talent and hard work in a systematic and effective manner to get optimum results.

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