

Book Review

Title: Go, kiss the World

Author: Subroto Bagchi

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“Go, kiss the world” is a book for every professional; those last words were from Bagchi’s mother’s last words to him which of course became the guiding principle of his life. The book is segregated into part one, two and three. Part one starts with the early years of Bagchi where the reader is taken through the aspect of family ties, values; where the importance of character gets imprinted in the young mind of bagchi. In the first few chapters Subroto bagchi’s beautiful narration on how he had to change five schools and the development of bond with displacement is indeed thought provoking. The reader in you will be struck when the lines strike nonchalantly “It is important to know that quite often displacement is the key to progress and we need to develop comfort with it. Water in a pool is stagnant; only when it flows is it energized. The entire universe is in constant motion; even a moment of motionless is inconceivable in the cosmic state of things. Many professionals shudder at the thought of physical displacement, yet crave rapid mobility and growth in their careers.”

Similarly the chapter “Of Adversity and Faith” brims with the experiences Bagchi had to face in his family. Be it the pain of seeing his mother’s two eyes that were open but had no vision or the constant dialogue from her “ Our vision is not always a function of our capability to see, it is our willingness to open up our inner eye to the limitless universe that lights up the path of our existence.” These lines are like the imprints that get etched on the minds of the reader for a life-time. Bagchi as an author pulls the strings of the emotional chord when the description and perception of pain and pall of gloom is expressed. His lines “As I step on the

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thorn, if I begin to blame the thorn, the pain has a tendency to linger; sometimes the pain expands as time passes, its memory holding center stage, coloring how we view and feel about our lives. In life, we cannot avoid pain. What we can do is learn from the pain and move on.”

The importance of mentoring at Mind tree was developed because of the “Power of mentoring” Bagchi had received as a young man from his siblings and his Father. The bonding he had with his elder brother had a profound impact on his behavior and he considers all these as a blessing. As a reader one is bound to ruminate on the lines “humility makes the mind an empty vessel that can receive. The capacity to receive expands when there is the willingness to give back-only when we return what we receive, are we blessed to receive even more.

Bagchi’s reference to information overload and attention deficit is very interesting. Especially when he recounts that “People we meet are often looking at us but thinking something else. Given that, it is important that in every situation one has to be not only well prepared but razor sharp to create instant engagement. Be it a job, interview, a presentation or a meeting, we all have a very short window to make the right impression, and unfortunately most of us miss it.” It is not philosophical but reality when Bagchi has a metaphor of river. The beautiful lines are “Our lives are like rivers-the source seldom reveals the confluence. Does a river fret over the long journey and about its end just as it is about to spurt? It simply does not do that, caring instead to flow, to begin its journey, and on its way builds a beneficial relationship with anyone who comes in contact with her.”

Part two of the book is more about the making of a professional who, like everyone else, wanted to be someone. It is familiar phase with its many ups and downs during which we realize the dissonance between the romance of youth and the reality of the workplace, though with some perspective and certain mindset they can be aligned. Bagchi’s journey of working as a clerk in a government office and finally ended up co-founding Mind Tree-India’s first venture-funded IT services company to get publicly listed is an amazing story.

“Learning to fly” is a wonderful chapter wherein Bagchi draws his inspiration from Jonathan Livingston’s Seagull. The tough job of selling and the power of communication are beautifully captured, when he says “communication is a key requirement to be an effective

leader in a large organization.” Those who write well learn to synthesize their ideas better; it makes them better thinkers.

Leaders who generate content even as they perform their work, help their organization learn.” Also the significance of building one’s talent and nurturing and cherishing them is reflected “We all have some talent in us. Yet so many of us choose the uni-dimensionality of a work life, always citing lack of time to pursue a hobby. If we make a small commitment towards keeping our talent alive, one day it becomes a beautiful gift, which nourishes us, make our lives complete.”

Bagchi’s journey from HCL to Wipro meeting of transformational Leaders like Azim Premji and Ashok Soota and his huge learning from the experiences are very intriguing.

Part three is a journey of forties which is a defining period. One cannot afford to miss out on the fable from Panchatantra, the old tiger with golden bangle and the poor Brahmin. Here, Bagchi is blatant about the midlife crisis and the transition associated with it. His wise remark “In reality, high achievers are also their worst enemies and sometimes make near-fatal mistakes.” Is worth pondering! The titles of certain chapters like “Leadership in a time of crisis”, “Building emotional infrastructure” “Tomorrow always comes” and “Servant Leadership” itself is an inspiration.

The saga of building an IT empire with the help of different professionals and their intellectual drive is worth experiencing. In the final leaflets of the book Bagchi concludes with a solid remarkable statements like “It’s all in the mind” “The power to receive” “To get, you must give” “Connect with people” ”Life is constant negotiation” “The slippery slope of achievement” “the marginal person is important” “Passion is what passion does” “The power of resilience” “the key to happiness is not money” “Look beyond yourself” “real men say sorry” “learn to forgive yourself” “self-doubt is positive”

Some of his statements can be considered as an arsenal in the tool kit for success. Especially when he says “There is little one can do to rewind and reconsider choices, something life allows you when you are in your twenties. In this phase of life’s journey, unless one handles oneself with contemplation and care, the precipice and not the pinnacle becomes the

destination. I have seen countless overachievers who come up to this point and then must leave the professional journey of their choice.”

Bagchi does not conclude his thoughts without mentioning about his better half. In his words “Susmita grew up with me and has been an abiding influence on my professional career. Seldom can one reach the top without enlisting the support of a loved one. I cannot imagine where I would be today if she hadn’t been by my side since she was fifteen. Ever since, she has remained my Rock of Gibraltar.”

In conclusion, “Go Kiss the world is an inspiration to “Young India” it is indeed life lessons for the young professionals. A must read for every one