

Feather to the hat

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Abstract

Medicine- one of the most noble and prestigious professions commences with the rigorous preparations for the entrance exams and probably never ends because you keep learning.

The phase of a UG medical student's life is the most transforming one as you enter the college with fascination about being a part of the medical fraternity and by the time you reach final year, a student is moulded into a Doctor- an empathetic, conscientious medical professional. This article will hold your hand as you go back and take a stroll in the lanes of your college.

“A cauliflower is nothing but a cabbage with college education” - Mark Twain

WHY GO TO COLLEGE? To do what you can't do in order to learn how to do it seems to be the most apt answer to that. This time of my life has been a remarkable milestone in all aspects of my personality development, it has taught me to think differently as medico and has imbibed the sense of ethics and professionalism in me during its course.

When I started with this article, I realised how (probably my) college life bears a surprising parallelism with our life back in school. The first prof in medical college is like the 10th grade in school where the graph of responsibility suddenly plunges up. The constant feeling of edginess had been common in those two times of my life which had always boosted me up to perform optimally in the corresponding academic year and pull it off impressively. Likewise, getting to understand the phenomenal human architecture in it's true sense through the subjects of first prof made me realise the gravity of hardwork it takes to be a competent medical professional.

The path of the second prof looked similar to that of the 11th grade. It felt like an opportunity of a lifetime to stand alongside the doctors in the ward or OPD. The table had turned and it was my turn to listen to the patient's history and deduce a clinically sound diagnosis. While I was fascinated by the mere sound of the new terminologies that we came across, I also noticed a change in my behaviour. The graph of responsibility had decided to take a break for now. Looking at a long journey of fifteen months ahead of me, I had started to explore college life and just like a teething baby's irresistible urge to bite onto something or the urge of a baby deer to hit onto everything when it's horns start to grow, I had allowed myself to indulge the time with friends and colleagues. Waking up early had become a thing of past and planning vacation trips on a weekly basis had started to trend. The clock never stopped ticking and we were soon back to books and the naive acid-base chemistry had turned into a study of interaction of drugs with the human body.

The third prof came in just like the 12th grade. The face off with the clinical subjects like reminded me of the widely opened eyes I had when I started getting into the deep concepts of modern physics, molecular chemistry, genetics, etc. The feeling of practicals in a lab turning into part completion tests in a ward made me realise that every step that I take now is, perhaps in some way, going to decide the course of my future ahead (pretty much 12th grade!).

Now, in the final prof, when I'm on the brink of an undergraduate student's life, I realise that this time has been very similar to the one between my school exams and the entrance exams. It wasn't short but every moment in it was deeply defined and felt like a lifetime. As a kid back then, all of the irrelevant concerns of life had momentarily subsumed in the fact that the upcoming exam is the one that defines my fate and honestly speaking, confronting the ultimate exam of the bachelor degree bears a striking resemblance to that. Now I find my ears patiently listening to every symptom the patient says, I find my eyes constantly trying to capture the tiniest clinical sign and I find my mind staying keen to apply the knowledge, gather references and prepare differentials on coming across any kind of illnesses.

College is the best place to enjoy a happy life, nothing else can beat that and I swear you won't be able to live your college right if you don't have friends, because having them around makes the atmosphere in the campus positive and hopeful and no matter how hard the syllabus hits us, we manage to look it up straight in the eye and still have a smile on our faces. As Winston Churchill rightly said- “success is not final and failure is not fatal: it's the courage to continue that counts”.

YES! Most definitely medical education is hard. If it wasn't hard everyone would do it. It's the 'hard' that makes it great, achieving which was my prime motto as I walked in the door of this college as a boy. Now, when I look back at the journey from the first day until this day, gradually metamorphosing into a doctor, I realise that while we only longed for a graduation hat, our college life has added a beautiful lustrous feather to it.