

Showing up Is Half the Battle

by Anil Shrivastava “Musafir”



It has been more than a week since I wrote any featured article. Usually, I write at least one new post every week. I have been following this routine for years. Suddenly, I just didn't feel like writing anything. Then I realized something before giving up. I needed to use some grit. My mind suggested to me that I'd feel good if I wrote something. That way, I'd accomplish something. I got reminded of my favorite Waldo Emerson's quote, "The reward of a thing well done is having done it."

During the COVID lockdown, I learned to code in HTML5, CSS3, and JavaScript. I created a training program for the beginners and put it on the Web, but was not able to market it successfully. I learned the Urdu language and wrote at least 50 ghazals (Urdu poems) and Hindi poems but I couldn't find anyone to edit and publish my work. So, I felt like giving up.

What happened here is not unique to me. We often want immediate results of our work. This is also called instant gratification, but we avoid the struggle that comes with that. We want to be shapely like a model or a movie star but avoid the grind that they've to go through. We just want the results without the sweat. We

want to become the CEO of a company but avoid risk-taking and lack the indomitable spirit that is required for the job.

I feel that life needs a reality check. It is easy to fall prey to

our wanton desires. It needs firmness of character to get over dormancy resulting from frustration. In fact, life is certainly getting better day by day. We don't have to hunt for food nor do we have to build our own hut. One of our biggest inconveniences today is, probably, forgetting the phone charger. Sorry, I went back to the Neolithic age. Someone posted a list of interesting inconveniences on WhatsApp that our generation faced while growing up. We took rides in bull carts; studied under kerosine lanterns; chatted through snail mail and grew up without TV, air-conditioner, heater, and personal computers. How could I forget all that? Isn't life good now?

So, what should we do the next time we feel like giving up? We may slow down for a while but must show up. "Showing up is half the battle." The best of all, according to the Hindu tenet, "You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions" (The Bhagwat Gita, Chapter 2, verse:47).

