

Whether painful, dramatic or low-keyed, a moment exists in everyone's life, when a personal choice must be made, that forever changes the inner core of one's being and the outer layers of one's fate. Even in the midst of this chosen moment, a whisper permeates the air, like slow-rising smoke that lingers in its promise: nothing can ever be the same again. Such moments are readily remembered, even when they occurred years earlier. One such moment stays in my mind. It is the time I sagely told my mother, "I love you very much, but my moving out is the panacea of our troubles. I'll visit you as much as possible, but don't make me stay, Mama." This marked the commencement of my managerial career, as I became the savant and sole-proprietor of my life.

I was fourteen, when constant familial scandals provoked my exodus from home and the people I most loved: my mother and my brother. By all accounts, my family was of modest means. My penurious mother, divorced from a violent inebriate, tried her best to bring up two children on her own. By the time she met my stepfather, she thought her financial and spiritual woes would be lifted, yet she was sadly mistaken.

Our home turned into a cyclical nightmare, where everyone tried desperately to assuage one very sick man, "Narcissus", who severely punished any little wrongdoing. Remarks such as, "These mentally retarded and good-for-nothing kids belong in a boarding school for idiots," haunted my brother and I on a diurnal basis while at home. Finally, after having had enough of the verbal and physical torrents of abuse, I moved out into a tiny apartment and, thanks to my mother's support, started a new life, on my own.

My badly treated brother, on the other hand, finally gave up on being 'good and smart' and expressed his rebellion and self-loathing through the venues of drugs and alcohol. "Life is better with the help of chemistry," he sadly joked. I, however, set out on a personal mission to disprove my stepfather's convicted prophecies concerning my 'worthlessness'. I became the sole sculptor of my destiny's clays.

Initially following my move, people thought I was the happiest teenager on earth, as I never shared my problems or expected pity. My sense of humor, keen enthusiasm, hard working nature, and ability to make quick, just decisions under pressure attracted friends, even when I was a nubile schoolgirl. I honed in on these qualities, which eventually blossomed into even more substantial trademarks of my persona: persistence, meticulousness, punctuality, and reliability, qualities for which I'm not only respected, but which are also essential in the arena of any business environment.

Later, after becoming Valedictorian of my high school class, I succeeded in circumventing the corrupt circles of academic bribery, by enrolling in the university by virtue of my own academic excellence. Post-graduation, I obtained invaluable knowledge on how to lead, organize, and supervise people, as well as how to be diplomatic and earn others' trust in me and my projects. After my three-year tenure as a teacher, I succeeded in obtaining positions with a few international trading companies, where I was advanced from the status of trainee to that of supervisor. In addition, I traveled a great deal and improved my multi-lingual talents in five languages. I gained the respect of my employers and coworkers. However, what truly stabilized my life was my having been married. Thereafter, my next turn of life events brought me to the USA.

It was here in America where my husband, a wonderful person, great businessman, former owner of a multimillion-dollar corporation, and an alumni of

UCLA, introduced me to the Western way of conducting business. I became smitten with the latter. Due to this new 'love interest', I learned to recognize the opportunities for expressing my talents in the world of commerce and trade. While I am not short of ambition and experience, I nonetheless lack the basic underlying theory for effectively managing and running a business. The completion of an MBA program will be instrumental to my continued growth and success.

Regardless of the trials and tribulations of my youth, I surfaced as the winner, the one who was not diminished by any obstacles that surfaced. Every caveat along my path, I turned into a stepping-stone, and merely continued on my way. I am earnestly hoping that entering your business school will be one of the greatest stops I will ever make along the infinitely winding road that beckons my journey.