

# **Dreaming and Daring to do**

## **Haider Hussain**

Mr Shaukat Ali teaches Chemistry to the students of FSc. Ruddy looking, always neatly but simply dressed. Students would know of his approach before he entered the class; the reason was the strong expensive cologne that he always wore. He had a dignified and imposing personality. He would start his lecture with some light-hearted comments, kept the classroom atmosphere rather pleasant and was a sociable person. Hospitality and a willingness to always be of service to others were his distinguishing qualities. At a sub-conscious level I am so impressed by him that my friends point out to me how I emulate some of his habits and it is true that in refinement and good conduct I do follow his example, and why ever not, his qualities merit such a response.

He laid great emphasis on presentation. After the lecture he would ask each student to step up to the front of the class and give a speech. This is called 'micro-teaching' in the field of education. In this the supervisor picks out fine points to correct each student. This improves our pronunciation and our command of the topic in question.

He would give us a huge amount of homework and check it strictly, point out our mistakes and make us correct them. At the end of each month he would give us an assignment. Anyone who wouldn't do that assignment had to sit with Sir Shaukat and finish their work. I would often not do my assignment so I would get a chance to sit with him and exchange thoughts with him! This would help me resolve a lot of questions that had come up while studying.

Sir Shaukat encouraged us to think and reflect in a scientific manner. He would involve us in short, practical activities. First he would demonstrate himself and then he would ask us to repeat the activity. He lived not far from the students' hostel so I would

often go down to his place. I learnt how to use a computer from him. He showed me how to use the internet, how to create my own email account, how to search for a given topic using the internet. He always had good advice to give, whether I had a problem in my studies or in my everyday life. His advice always measured well on the scale of solving the problem.

I once had a dream in which I saw myself working on a project. The project involved using low cost material to cool a room. I was using an exhaust fan, a big pipe and a system for the flow of air. I dug a big ditch and poured water in it. I covered the top part and attached the exhaust fan to it, and next to the exhaust fan is the big pipe. Then I brought the other end of the pipe to the room, added ice to the water. When I switched on the exhaust fan, it captured the air and cool air started to enter the room. All this in a very vivid dream!

I shared this dream with my teacher. He said the whole concept was technically quite sound, but it has to be fine tuned further. He said to keep in mind the principles on which the process of evaporation is based, how the molecules that have more kinetic energy become vapour and exit from the surface of the water.

I planned to work on the idea had seen in my dream, but this time in real life. However, our exams were drawing closer so I didn't get around to it. What was important was that my teacher took my dream seriously, breathed life into my imagination that was evident from the dream. He turned my dream into a practical thought. Now it is up to me to turn that practical thought into reality.

From Sir Shaukat's way of living and teaching I learnt one thing for sure: that I want to be a teacher and that I want to imbibe in myself all his good qualities. Good

conduct, conversation, thought and reflection, propriety in walking, refinement in working, and performing each task with all my heart.

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