

# Learning to Value the Little Good in Me

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I am a teacher at the Aagahi Education System. I am neither very important nor am I a great entity, nor do I have such qualities as would draw people to me. But one incident in my life made me feel that I must have some good in me, from which others can benefit.

I was a novice teacher then, teaching class prep, a particularly naughty bunch of kids. Except Omar Arif. Omar didn't do anything. He didn't play, he didn't speak, he didn't study. He wouldn't even take his copies or books out of his bag. If I would insist that he do so, he would either hide or would burst into tears.

This was very strange. I didn't know how to make any sense out of it. I spoke to my head teacher Ms Lubna and with her advice I started to pay him extra attention. Initially he was too afraid to come near me, if I would ask him to read to me he would start to cry out of anxiety.

I then made it a point to ask him about his family everyday, or what he had for breakfast; I would ask him questions that posed no challenge to him and therefore he would have no fear of not getting the answer right. These were questions he wasn't threatened by. Then when it was time to read I would ask him to read first, so he got conditioned that he had to be the first to read and there was no way he could dodge that.

Gradually his fear gave way to ease in communication. He started to eagerly bring his work to me to get it checked. Specially in English he was now doing better than any child in class prep had ever done.

Omar secured second position in the final exams. More importantly, he was now like other children, enjoying his childhood like a child should. This led me to believe that perhaps, I do have some good in me.

*The author of the story is a teacher at the Idara Taleem o Aagahi center for children from the deprived community*