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Life makes the decisions

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If you assume you make them, you may be wrong: life has its own sequence and ways

Often enough we are told that 'we make decisions on our life'. Sorry, I beg to differ. It is life that makes decisions for us. I am not trying to counter what the scholars said, since all of us are not scholars. Maybe in the lives of scholars they made the 'decisions' instead of life. In their case also, 'life or destiny' forces them to take such decisions. Normally it is said an incident, accident or event changed the life of a person and made him/her something other than what he/she would otherwise have been.

I honestly tell you: it is a series of events or happenings make one take the decisions. As the popular joke goes, 'most' of the actors (read actresses) were interested in becoming 'doctors' in case they had not chosen the path of acting. May be true or false; because all of them (never) had got admission in the medical college and turned it down! Isn't it?

No way; right from their childhood they had been exposed to the arc lights and it is their family atmosphere that made them actors. I am sure everybody will accept the fact that the profession of medicine is entirely different from that of acting.

I always look at my life as an example of how life decides many things for me. I studied Chemical Engineering but never thought I will join a national lab that is engaged in research for a particular industry. A classmate of mine suggested to me while I was jobless to apply for the post of pool officer in the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research made me land up in CSIR; because I had not got a placement of my choice in other labs where my subject was very much there. A meeting with the Director of the institute put me under the wings of a scientist.

Even after a tenure of three years on contract it was very tough for me to get a regular placement there since there was no chemical engineering section. A very senior scientist was averse to allowing a chemical engineer into the laboratory for some strange reason and created as many impediments as possible to stop my entry. But destiny's decision was something else. I joined as a scientist and was instructed to teach, which I hated like poison. But I had no option but to accept it to start my career. I thought at that time, 'If I have to be in this job, the first thing I need to learn is to develop a liking for it.' I volunteered myself to be a good guide to the students than being a great teacher. However, my sincerity was rewarded.

In a couple of years of my joining, a new director came and started a chemical engineering department in a big way. Even then, neither was I invited there nor was my department ready to relieve me as there was none to take care of 60 to 80 students continuously. But I was asked to partially extend my services to the new department in their consultancy assignments in a particular new field of engineering. I started on that. There were several others in the chemical engineering department, all seniors to me and well-experienced.

At one point of time I was transferred to the chemical engineering department on the then director's orders. I continued with my consultancy work though personally speaking I wasn't a convincing sales person. I hated the sales job too. Nevertheless, slowly the entire job of getting the projects and completing them to the satisfaction of clients fell on me. As I began relishing teaching, I started liking promoting our activities in the consultancy. Again I tried to be sincere and dedicated, which brought in many clients. So, knowingly or unknowingly I have been pushed into careers I never liked or imagined to be my favourite areas.

Things started moving at such a pace that many seniors in my department started moving to greener pastures. When there were just seven years of my service left, my head of the department who was younger to me was moved as director to another lab. Since I was the only senior person with experience in the department, I became the head of the chemical engineering department. What an irony? One fine day, the person who had sworn that he would never allow a chemical engineer in the lab came to me with a request to do some work for him! Would you say it is all because of my choices or my efforts?

I haven't done the mandatory doctorate for a scientist as the problem suggested to me was never solved; even today none of the other 'intelligent' groups that had taken up the work has been unable to solve it. It went into cold storage.

But I am not worried. Because, I have the greatest satisfaction of serving as a consultant to more than 120 chemical industries in India and abroad in a special field and also I am sought after even after my retirement. The spectrum of my experience is, if I muse now, amazing. I am indeed proud about it.

But the chances and the decisions were never made by me; it was life or fate or time, whichever way one wants to call it, that made the decisions and forced me to accept and do the work. Today I don't talk of my subject or go for consulting. I intentionally retired from it. I prefer to go only for some lectures (teaching) if I am asked to for young aspirants.

Had a bus conductor ever imagined that he would become a rage in the movie world of a different language? Had someone whose voice was rejected by AIR imagined he would turn out to be the best voice in filmdom? Had a teenage actor who was pushed into movies without a choice ever dreamt of becoming a powerful party leader and chief minister of a

State? Would an errand boy to a group of religious workers ever see himself being in the position of leading a country?

They haven't worked for it; life worked for them and catapulted them into those positions. As it had done for me in a very small way in comparison.

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Sukhois hobbled by lack of blast pens near LoC

Hence they could not be sent to intercept PAF jets.

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