

Your Talent is God's Gift you. What you do with it is your gift back to God

Calumet Toastmasters, Club# 3313
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Opening

"I am a Super Cat"

"I am too good at this - I am the best"

"I am so proud of my talent"

Have you ever said any of these words to yourself? Probably YES. I used to feel this way about myself, but not any more.

Body

What's the problem in feeling proud of me? I know I am a hard working, committed and well disciplined person so why should I not take the credit of my own accomplishments?

Here is what I think: However intelligent and hard working I am, if I don't get the right opportunity to prove myself, it's not going to help me out. Without an opportunity I can't prove to the world that I am capable of doing something. The word 'Opportunity' is the key here.

For example, I know few of my classmates in INDIA who have settled in low paying jobs, not because they are not hardworking, not because they don't have enough skills, but only because they didn't have access to the same resources I had access to & only because they never got an opportunity to prove themselves. So, it is NOT fair on my part to think I am a Super Intelligent and that's why I am at a higher paying job, NO, it is just not fair. What is fair is to realize the fact that every one doesn't have equal access to the resources. As our Ex-President Bill Clinton said in his book 'GIVING' - *"In every corner of America and all over the world, intelligence and energy are evenly distributed, but opportunity, investment and effective organizations aren't. As a result, billions of people are denied the chance to live their lives to the fullest and millions die needlessly each year"*

So, I need to realize that I haven't gone through a fair competition. When I realize this, it makes me feel bad or even guilty when I try to feel proud of my talent or my high paying job.

I have a friend of mine Mr Joseph Curiale. He lives in California and is a Composer, Author & also teaches at University of Nebraska. A few years back, one day he was watching a program on CNN about a poor farmer family in INDIA - the head of the household committed suicide due to heavy debts leaving behind his wife and two little girls. Obviously, the family had no clue of what to do as they were still in neck-deep debts. This man Joe was so disturbed by the tragic incident that he immediately flew to INDIA, freed the family from the \$2000 debt, adopted both the girls and also made arrangements for them to go to school. He visits his girls every year with lots of Christmas gifts. He has been doing all this by conducting fund raising orchestra events and by selling his own albums. I strongly believe he is making the best use of his talent.

I have another friend who is a Doctor in INDIA. She never bills/charges his patients who are poor and can not afford to pay his fee. She offers them consultation and treatment completely free of cost. She even goes to the nearby villages during the week-ends to offer her service to the poor villagers.

What else can be a better use of her skills as a doctor?

My another friend is a school teacher. He provides free tuitions to the poor students and he even pays their annual exam/tuition fee from his pocket each year.

People like these are a tremendous source of inspiration to us not only because they are successful individuals BUT also because they use their skills to the benefit of other needy people around and thus making their lives more meaningful. I think that is the best way to pay back to God. Just imagine if everyone does something like this with their own talent, this world will be a much better place to live in.

Conclusion

So, next time when you are tempted to feel proud of your talent - THINK AGAIN. Think of someone you know who is as intelligent as you, as hard working as you are but never got an opportunity to compete with you. So, remember the fact that you never went through a fair competition.

Instead of feeling proud, think of a way how your talent can benefit other people around you and in no time you will realize that is the best and easiest way to pay back to God for what he has blessed you with.

Last but not least, make sure our kids feel the same way. Please keep saying this to them - *"Your Talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is YOUR gift back to God"*.

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