

It was an evening which saw something unusual – CEOs and business heads got together not to discuss business, but to open their hearts and connect to their deep most experiences. Around 20 entrepreneurs gathered at the calm and classy ambience of Aashwasan corporate office to be part of the unique forum of Spirit-U-All™ on 28th March 2015.

The evening started with Aashwasan facilitator setting the tone of the forum by sharing about one of the most trying situations in his life and shared how that situation changed the course of his life completely. This transformation happened, he said, as he heard and followed his inner voice. “No one really understands or knows what the person on top goes through. One cannot really share with anyone. It is a lone journey,” he said. “But when we are connected to this voice within, we are never alone.” Thereon everyone shared some of the most demanding experiences, and in those experiences found the most precious learning for their life. A CEO brought out his deep angst when he shared, “I used to carry an immense amount of guilt within, as my fears and frustrations put my family through extreme times of stress and insecurity. Later I realized that every individual is responsible for his/her choice, and that people in my life are there in my life because they chose to be. I realized that when I am in guilt, I am nowhere in what I am doing. I am only in that guilt. Today I am free from guilt, and this is helping me focus on my vision better. I have pressure, but I don’t carry guilt within.” As the sharing continued, another entrepreneur talked about his experience was a little different. “The journey with Aashwasan opened up deep realization in me that excessive fear brings more deliberations and more analysis, which just takes one through circles. But fear in less intensity can act as a caution, which is a must for every leader to be grounded to reality.” And this learning brought great deal of calm in his mind and helped him focus better on his work. “The patience that is needed for any dream to see fruition is one of the most challenging times for an entrepreneur. What adds stress to it is the financial burden that it entails. To top it all, one needs to contend with the payments and delays, which can break one’s morale.” A young and successful entrepreneur shared that she even ran away from home to follow her dreams, and said that one needs to just believe in their dreams and themselves. Continuing the same thread of thought, this gentleman opened his action-packed life much to the mirth of the audience and shared “I have always listened to my inner voice but in phases, and I thought that I was being strange. Today I accept this about me. I am fine with it now.”



In the midst of the musings of the entrepreneur, another interesting aspect of human destiny opened up. An uncanny coincidence was witnessed in the forum, when one CEO shared the life-threatening incident when he was caught in a building on fire. He saw many dying and jumping off the building, and his being alive was no less than a miracle to everyone around. For him, death was never a thought. When he looks back, he is happy that this event happened as it gave him one of the biggest learnings in his life – things just happen. “One cannot control anything in life. I do not take stress anymore,” he reflected. Another person paused for a while to believe his ears when he heard this and shared the other side of the same story. He was in the same building which was engulfed by an intense smoke and heat. He and his colleagues, who were chefs at that time, rescued 15 people putting their life into danger. He shared that at that point the only thought was to save as many lives as they can. He shared that he still experiences nightmares, even after 5 years after that incident, and averred that he never spoke about it like this before. The two gentlemen found strange solace in each other’s experience.

The 2-hour session ended at 6 pm. The forum became an opportunity for every entrepreneur to look deeper, bring out their deep most fears, frustrations, and find a safe space to share. It became a space of celebration of the never-say-die spirit of an entrepreneur. The sharing gave much needed support to the budding entrepreneurs who keenly heard the years of experience speaking, as they embark on their new journey of entrepreneurship. Many stayed back to network and share notes, and continued talking to know each other, and savor the moment that gave them an opportunity to be with people who breathed, thought and felt like them.

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