

Nikita Karthik
HIST 1043
Jan 24, 2021

Part I

For the past four years, I've explored healthcare and medicine through school courses, internships, and extracurriculars and regardless of our physical distance, my grandpa had always cheered me on during every step of my scientific career. He was always the first to know when I obtained a certification, secured an internship, or began a new research project. However, in 2018, I got a call stating that my grandpa had been diagnosed with a severe case of diverticulitis. My dad explained that the gastroenterologist had outlined two surgery options -- they needed my input to decide. I texted back, frazzled. "*Am I really qualified to advise on this intimate medical decision?*" To my surprise, he told me my grandpa himself had asked for my consultation. Since that defining time in my life, I felt a new sense of confidence in my decision to enter the medical field in a future career of mine, seeing how my grandpa focused on turning his ailment into a learning opportunity for me rather than letting me constantly grieve and worry. I was revitalized by his optimism.

I began research consisting of google searches, medical manuals from the library, and staying up late to call my grandfather's surgeon at ungodly hours (due to the time difference) to understand the complexities of his condition, and the risks/recovery of his proposed surgeries. I've since then furthered my gastroenterology knowledge to better understand his condition in case of relapse by pursuing a medical assistant position at a gastroenterology clinic. Without his constant support during that period of time in our lives, I would still be doubting my motivation to pursue a career in medicine. I am forever grateful that he's regained his health, and continues to motivate me to reach that goal every day.



Nikita Karthik
HIST 1043
Jan 24, 2021

Part II

One of the most defining moments in my mom's life was when her first child was born. The birth of the first kid came with many challenges and emotions. She describes it as an insurmountable feeling of joy, confusion, thrill, and challenge, all wrapped up in 7 pounds. When she had her first child, me, she was midway through acquiring her master's degree in the United States after having done her undergraduate in India. Among other barriers such as language and cultural that she had overcome in her recent transition to the United States, she said having a child was the perfect addition to her life, and made her feel as if every challenge thrown her way till that day was worth it.

My mother described the external hardships that came with having a child amidst a new job and new collegiate experience in a different country. She explained the judgement that came with her coworkers and professors upon knowing she had taken on yet another responsibility among the many current ones she had, yet she pushed through it and not only graduated, progressed in her professional career, but also did her best in raising a child with immense love and support.

The way my mom talks about this moment in her life shows me that her dedication to persevere came largely from another human being, just as mine does. She makes me appreciate the family I've been born into, and appreciate the support I have received from all sides of it. I'm glad I was able to spark such joy in her life by being born, and I hope to continue to motivate her in all aspects of her life as she has mine.

