THE VIBHA CHRONICLES
Lessons from a Life Lived in Knowledge and Grace

EPISODE TWO

THE SPARK OF LEARNING: WHERE CURIOSITY BECAME CHARACTER

Every remarkable journey begins somewhere quiet.

Before the achievements, before the professional titles, before the travels across continents - there was a young girl in Nairobi with a deep curiosity about the world.

That girl was Vibha.

Long before her story became the inspiring narrative captured in In Quest of Knowledge, her path had already begun to take shape in classrooms, books, and the quiet determination to learn.

This chapter of her life reveals something powerful:
• **Great lives are not built suddenly.**

• **They are built through small habits of learning, day after day.**

The Nairobi Years: Learning Beyond the Classroom

Born in Nairobi in the 1950s, Vibha grew up in a family that valued education deeply. While economic realities sometimes shifted around them, one principle remained constant in her home:

Education was never negotiable.

Her parents ensured that she and her siblings had access to the best schooling they could provide. But Vibha's academic achievements were not the result of pressure or rigid discipline.

They came from something more meaningful - curiosity.

In her own handwritten reflections, Vibha recalls how her school years shaped her love for learning. She often topped her class, not because she chased ranks, but because she genuinely enjoyed discovering new ideas.

Her curiosity extended beyond textbooks. Literature, languages, and debates fascinated her. She took part in school activities and discussions, sharpening her mind and her voice.

Even at a young age, the foundations of her character were becoming clear:
• A questioning mind
• A disciplined work ethic
• A quiet confidence

When Learning Becomes a Habit of Life

Many students study to pass exams.

Vibha studied to understand the world.

Her journey would eventually take her from Nairobi to the United Kingdom, where she pursued higher education and later excelled at what is now known as Cardiff University.

Living independently while studying was not easy. It demanded courage, resilience, and maturity.

Yet this environment helped her flourish.

Wisdom That Shaped Her Journey

One of the principles that resonated deeply with Vibha was a timeless thought from Mahatma Gandhi:

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."
In Gujarati:
"એવું જીવો જાણે તમે કાલે મરી જવાના છો,
અને એવું શીખો જાણે તમે હંમેશા જીવવાના છો."

This idea reflects Vibha's lifelong philosophy - to live fully, and to keep learning endlessly.

University life expanded her horizons. Alongside her academic work, she became active in student societies, including the Indian Association and the debating society. These experiences sharpened not just her intellect, but also her ability to engage with ideas, cultures, and perspectives.

Education was no longer confined to the classroom.
It had become a way of life.

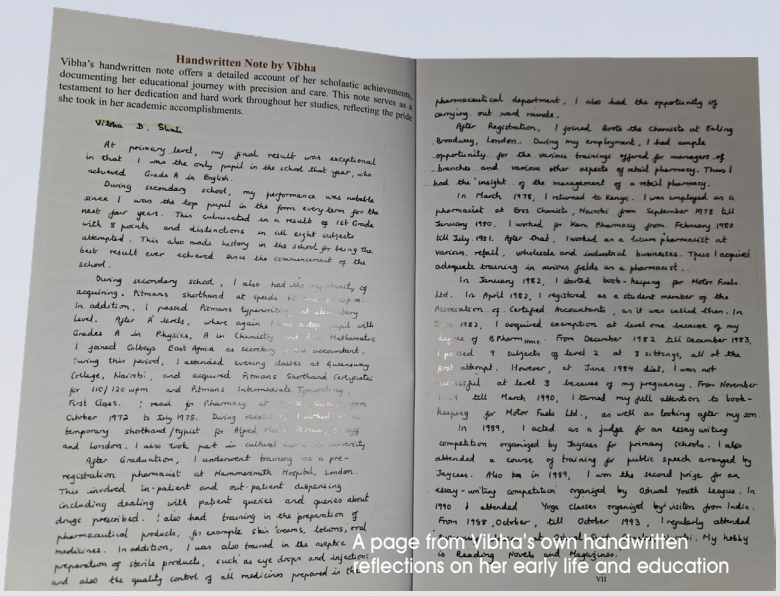
The Discipline Behind Excellence

One of the striking elements of Vibha's handwritten note is her description of persistence.

She did not rush through life.

She progressed steadily - building knowledge, strengthening skills, and expanding her understanding step by step.

This approach would later define her remarkable professional journey, where she successfully pursued multiple qualifications across different disciplines.



Handwritten Note by Vibha

Vibha's handwritten note offers a detailed account of her scholastic achievements, documenting her educational journey with precision and care. This note serves as a testament to her dedication and hard work throughout her studies, reflecting the pride she took in her academic accomplishments.

Vibha D. Shah

At primary level, my final result was exceptional in that I was the only pupil in the school that year, who achieved Grade A in English.

During secondary school, my performance was notable since I was the top pupil in the form every term for the next four years. This culminated in a result of 16 Grade with 5 points and distinctions in all eight subjects attempted. This also made history in the school for being the best result ever achieved since the commencement of the school.

During secondary school, I also had the opportunity of acquiring Pitmans shorthand at speeds [illegible] p.m. In addition, I passed Pitmans typewriting at elementary level. After A levels, where again I was a top pupil with Grades A in Physics, A in Chemistry and B in Mathematics I gained Cibbys East Africa as secretary and accountant. During this period, I attended evening classes at Kenyatta College, Nairobi, and acquired Pitmans Shorthand Certificate for 110/120 wpm and Pitmans Intermediate Typewriting 1st Class. I read for Pharmacy at [illegible] from October 1972 to July 1975. During vacations I worked as temporary shorthand/typist for Alfred [illegible] and London. I also took part in cultural [illegible] University.

After Graduation, I underwent training as a pre-registration pharmacist at Hammersmith Hospital, London. This involved in-patient and out-patient dispensing including dealing with patient queries and queries about drugs prescribed. I also had training in the preparation of pharmaceutical products, for example skin creams, lotions, oral medicines. In addition, I was also trained in the aseptic preparation of sterile products, such as eye drops and injections and also the quality control of all medicines prepared in the pharmaceutical department. I also had the opportunity of carrying out ward rounds.

After Registration, I joined Boots the Chemists at Ealing Broadway, London. During my employment, I had ample opportunity for the various trainings offered for managers of branches and various other aspects of retail pharmacy. Thus I had the insight of the management of a retail pharmacy.

In March 1978, I returned to Kenya. I was employed as a pharmacist at Bros Chemists, Nairobi from September 1978 till January 1980. I worked for Ken Pharmacy from February 1980 till July 1981. After that, I worked as a locum pharmacist at various retail, wholesale and industrial businesses. Thus I acquired adequate training in various fields as a pharmacist.

In January 1982, I started book-keeping for Motor Fuels Ltd. In April 1982, I registered as a student member of the Association of Certified Accountants, as it was called then. In [illegible] 1983, I acquired exemption at level one because of my degree of B.Pharmacy. From December 1982 till December 1983, I passed 9 subjects of level 2 at 3 sittings, all at the first attempt. However, at June 1984 diet, I was not successful at level 3 because of my pregnancy. From November [illegible] till March 1990, I turned my full attention to book-keeping for Motor Fuels Ltd., as well as looking after my son.

In 1989, I acted as a judge for an essay writing competition organized by Jaycees for primary schools. I also attended a course of training for public speech arranged by Jaycees. Also in 1989, I won the second prize for an essay-writing competition organized by Oshwal Youth League. In 1990 I attended Yoga classes organized by visitors from India. From 1988, October, till October 1993, I regularly attended [illegible] My hobby is Reading Novels and Magazines.

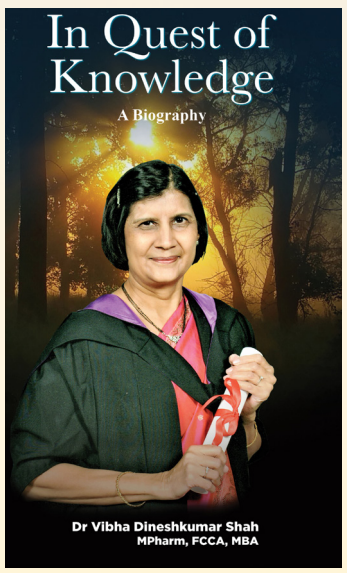
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A page from Vibha's own handwritten reflections on her early life and education

'Curiosity was never a phase in Vibha's life - it was her way of being.'

But the foundation of that achievement was built here - in these early years of disciplined study and intellectual curiosity.
Her story reminds us of a truth that is often forgotten:

Talent may open doors, but discipline keeps them open.



Vibha
Born: 1950s, Nairobi, Kenya
Education: Cardiff University
Qualifications: MPharm, FCCA, MBA
Marriage: 1978 (42 years)
Children: Shail, Shrena, Preksha
Passed Away: October 2021

Lessons From Vibha's Early Years

Looking back at Vibha's formative years, three powerful lessons emerge.

1. Curiosity is the beginning of wisdom.
The desire to ask questions is the first step toward understanding the world.
2. Education shapes character.
Learning is not only about information - it builds patience, humility, and resilience.

3. Consistency creates excellence.
Success rarely comes from one moment of brilliance; it comes from years of dedication.

These values would guide Vibha throughout her life - through academic achievements, profession

A Voice That Still Speaks

One of the most moving elements of In Quest of Knowledge is Vibha's own handwritten account of her journey.

Reading her words today, one feels her presence - thoughtful, reflective, and deeply aware of the value of education.

Her writing does not boast of achievements.
Instead, it quietly records the steps of a lifelong learner.

And perhaps that humility is what makes her story so powerful.

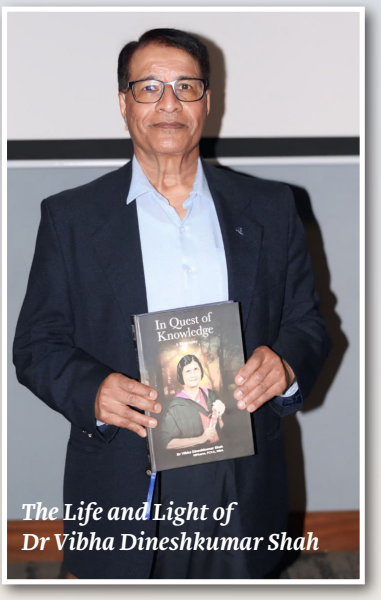
Episode Two Takeaway

• Curiosity Creates Destiny

From a young student in Nairobi to a lifelong learner who continued to pursue knowledge across disciplines, Vibha's life teaches us something simple yet profound:
Never stop learning.

Because education is not merely preparation for life.
It is life itself.

A Husband's Tribute



This remarkable story has been lovingly authored by Vibha's husband, Dinesh Shah, with whom she shared 42 years of marriage - a partnership built on respect, shared dreams and an unwavering belief in the power of education.

Reflecting on Vibha's life and philosophy, he writes:

'This book is not about what I lost. It is about what the world gained by having Vibha in it.'
He also remembers one of Vibha's many words of wisdom that guided her throughout life:

'If you truly wish for something, even the gods will ensure it happens.'

It was a belief she lived by - pursuing knowledge with patience, courage and quiet determination.

EPISODE 3
Love, Letters and a New Beginning.
The story of partnership, marriage, and how shared dreams shaped the next chapter of Vibha's remarkable journey.

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