

MINGLING WITH MY SIBLING!

This year on the 10th of April 2025 we celebrate World Sibling Day. The focus of this day is to encourage and appreciate our siblings. The day also aims to initiate more effective actions we need to take to show our love and affection, care and attention and the bonds of safety and security we share as siblings of the same parents who so wondrously brought us into this world and who have led us to believe that although the world may look upon us with disdain and defiance we must remember that blood is thicker than water and that in the end, after all is said and done, your sibling is the one and only one! In this context I would like to tell you about how one of the most influential women I've known, my sister Michelle, impacted my life and changed my outlook on the world forever. My sister taught me to be strong. It's the kind of inner strength that comes from resistance rather than mere physical strength. To quote Mahatma Gandhi "Strength does not come from physical capacity, it comes from an indomitable will". She taught me to persevere and never to give up. That resulted from a strong mental framework, a combination of determination and resilience that I partly attribute to her inherent genetic make-up. She encouraged me to do my best always. Where does that come from? Well, it has been the endeavour of people down the ages to achieve perfection, but what can I say of a person who has believed that if you don't play to win you might as well not have participated in the first place. She taught me to be the kind of person one turns to in one's darkest moments. Not all of us have the God given gift of kindness and compassion, of reaching out someone in need by lighting a candle to help them be better able to see their way in the darkness. Without her I would never have learned how to be a friend or how to show compassion to another person. She taught me to believe in myself and in the fact that we are all blessed with many God-given gifts and talents, however, the degree to which we use them to help others is the measure of how much we are prepared to share these gifts with those who are not as fortunate to be as blessed as we are. She has enriched my life by helping me become the person I would like to be introduced to! They say education moulds your character and your personality, but I would like to say that perfecting it depends upon you. You can choose to be the embodiment of all that is good and right in the world, by condemning injustices, by speaking up for those who don't have the strength to fight for themselves, by taking up the cause of the oppressed and suppressed in society, by uplifting the downtrodden and giving generously and without hesitation and restraint to those who are not as privileged as you, or you can look the other way, you can ignore all the wrongdoings and the injustices of this world and live as though you were the only inhabitant on earth, the choice is yours. She has been a constant source of inspiration in my life. She is an incredible woman, a wonderful mother to her children, a devoted wife, a caring sister and a loving daughter. To quote the song she is "every woman in the world to me". Her passion for acquiring all that is perfect and elegant has led me to believe that it is far better to wait for an opportune moment to acquire that which is priceless rather than act in haste and acquire the worthless and the ordinary. It is the very act of selflessness displayed by her that has led me to become a person who can relate to someone else's misfortune, to be closely united with the suffering of the deprived and the downtrodden, to share and share alike irrespective of caste, creed and colour. She has taught me the true meaning of strength and perseverance, more than any class, book or internship ever will. She taught me that life isn't going to be perfect and that nothing is impossible. That there is no excuse or limitation that will ever prevent me from making my dreams turn into a reality. Ladies and Gentlemen please put your hands together for a woman who has never won an Oscar, has never known been bestowed with a National Award and who has never even had the joy of winning an Olympic medal, but who probably has had a greater impact on the lives of those she has touched, who has won more academic accolades than can afford to be mentioned and who has run a better race than the Olympics, the race of life. Yes, our relationship has seen its ups and downs. She's seen me at my worst and at my best. She's been my disciplinarian, my teacher and my mentor, but most importantly, she's been my best friend! This World Sibling Day celebrated on 10th April 2025, I salute you, my friend!!