



“INSPIRATIONAL”

EPISODE 6



Pushpa N. M (Preeya)

Awarded By “The President of India”,
TEDx Speaker, Indian Scribe,
Social Activist, Founder of “Youth Soaps”

*This episode of **INSPIRATIONAL** features a “True Story” from the life of **Ms. Pushpa N.M** (Awarded By “**The President of India**”, **TEDx Speaker**, **Indian Scribe**, **Social Activist**, **Founder of “Youth Soaps”**)*

“ There are millions of children in poverty. Many come through it and achieve great things. It is not easy sleeping on the floor, studying on an empty stomach, missing out on trips with friends and family. A girl like me from poor backgrounds, had to fight very hard for my present and future. I came from poor financial background. I did not have the same opportunities as other young people of my age. I had to work part time jobs, alongside my school and education. I did not have access to good education. I had to miss out on many classes in my school days. I had to work very hard to overcome the obstacles that life had put in front of me. Growing up in a household where money is tight can mean making do with a lot of things.

According to me poverty is: hunger and lack of shelter, being sick and not being able to see a doctor, not having access to proper schools, not knowing how to move on with finance issues and parents not having a job and fear for the future, living one day at a time. Me and my family have dwelled with these from young age itself.

Few experiences about my obstacles.

- 1. My father was working in MICO organization as a PR (Public Relation). While he was walking on the corridor, a worker pressed the switch and the crane (which was carrying a heavy machine) fell on him and he met with this accident inside the office. Unfortunately, we all were very young and small and did not get much benefits for our family. Instead, we all had to starve and my mother, who is 10th passed, did not have much knowledge. She had to start working for a small industry where her salary was about Rs. 500. With that money, we all four had to lead our life. My brother Mohan and myself were very small, and we had known what life is in that young age itself. Starving without basic food and not having proper clothes, we had to eat one-time meal in a day for few years.*
- 2. While I was studying, I used to see other children in school who used to carry their own food. Me and my brother did not have all such basic facilities. We wore torn shoes and not proper uniforms. Normally we did not have proper books to use. Me and my brother used to have one notebook. When he had his class, he used the front side of that notebook and later I had to borrow and write in the same notebook from the back side. Like this, many a times we had adjusted ourselves in schools in many such things. When me and my brother were unable to pay the necessary school fees, we were asked to come out from the examination hall. Later, somehow the fees were made concession in the school. But how long could our school support us when we did not have the money? Eventually, I was thrown out of the examination hall in the 7th standard. I did not know what to do at that time. I came home and told my mother and she in turn requested all the neighbors. She initially could not get any support and financial help. With one last try, my mother tried asking for financial help and then God blessed, and someone gave us some amount to pay my school fees and then I was able to take the exam (After few months, we had paid back to that lady).*
- 3. So, seeing this situation, both me and my brother (i.e. during the holidays) used to work in garments shop and earned few amounts of money. The money would help us to suffice for our food in the family.*
- 4. Finally, I passed my 10th and I wished to get admitted to college in the near future. However, we again had the same problem - did not have sufficient money to pay for admission. We went to government college and there also we had to pay some amount which we were not able to. Finally, one handicap person, who was my father's friend in*

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his organization, we tried to seek his help. He financed us the fees and we had to pay small amount every month. He paid my fees for my college for first year PUC. That was a good college. I had only two pairs of dress which I used for my entire PUC first year. Seeing my uniforms, all started to tease me and I used to tell the same story at my home.

Finally, I got admitted to College but there also I could not continue full-time because of my family problems. I attended college for one week and another one week I was working. In the age of 15 years I started to work, and below are the pics where I was working for entire few years. I worked in STD Booth, where travel booking and xerox were also a part of their services. Financial worries can make anyone feel stressed. Anxious and depressed parents may argue more or lose their temper more easily. Young people like us faces a difficult environment to grow up in.



The above pics are of me working. It was during this time, i.e. when I worked at STD Booth. My salary was only Rs. 750. For this I had to open the shop from 6 AM early morning and stay till 10 PM in the night and had to return home by bus. With this salary, me and my family had to pay the house rent and other essentials. This stage of my life was really very difficult for all of us. I did not know what more to do and often thought that how we will be okay, as we did

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not get any support from any of our native relatives or anyone else. But my hope was not dead. I believed that one day I will shine and stand tall like others.

From here, even though my education had a lot of breaks, I had to continue working very hard to reach the point in my life where I am today.

Sharing some of my life experiences of pains and happiness.

After me working in the STD booth , I had to continue to earn to financially support my family. My mother and brother and me, we all worked to earn around Rs. 2000 to survive and run the family. My brother was working in a shop and my mother was also working, i.e. besides me. We all had to struggle to live our life. One day, I started to work in an IT organization where I used to get Rs. 1500. I was working in the Reception and handling calls from there. I worked for 3 years and eventually my salary was Rs. 3000 per month. Form here I learnt decent English. I learnt how to speak and write in English . It was challenging as my education and upbringing was from Kannada medium background. It was during this job, I learnt typing and how to use the computer. I created my email-id and then started to learn many new things. I left office late, as I had the curiosity to learn computers and develop my skills to a higher level. This was my focus. I had challenged myself that I want to stand apart and stand tall and show people that we can also can learn and grow and live life the way we want to. After learning the computers, I started to look up for jobs at secretary level. However, the organization came to know that I was looking for a new job and they removed me from my work. I was blank again. Form here, I went on searching for jobs. All I was getting were short-term jobs, where I was required to work for only 5 months. In such short-term job roles, I worked for many number of organizations, i.e. co-ordination jobs. Still, I was able to learn many new things. I had given my sincere and honest efforts to learn from these job roles because I wanted to grow in my life. Finally, I joined an organization where my salary was Rs. 26,000. I joined the IT sector organization in a contractual position from a third party. Since then, I had worked in HP, MICROSOFT, AMAZON and other IT organisations.

*At one point time, I thought **I should contribute towards the wellbeing of my society**. Suddenly I came across an opportunity. One day, I met one blind student who wanted to cross the road. I helped him and we also boarded the same bus. I sat next to him and asked him that how he*

does his studies and manages his daily routines? He said, ‘someone as a guiding light comes forward and enables them to move forward in life’. His words acted as a trigger and I started to help our society in a very special and humanitarian way. **I started to scribe for visually impaired students in 2007.** I have written and I am still writing exams for people with disabilities, i.e. 10th to all the other specialisations. Initially, I was writing for visually impaired students.

Currently, below are the categories for whom I write as scribe.

- Visually impaired
- Cerebral palsy
- Down Syndrome
- Slow writing
- Depression
- Normal students who meets with an accident and are unable to write on the day of the exam, I will be as scribe for them.

Like this I have written exams from 10th standards to B.A., B.Com., B.Sc., B.B.A., B.C.A., B.B.M., M.Sc., M.Com., M.A., M.S.W., B.S.W., Lawyer exams, Computers Exams, Banking Exams and other projects works, Railway Exams, etc. For 14 years I have been writing these exams. I have written the exams for nearly 850 students and have achieved the recognition from **The Government of India in 2019 – ‘Nari Shakti Award’**, Women Highest Award from The President of India and Prime Minister.

Sharing some of my pics (Besides the Cover Picture):



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I wanted to tell that a girl, who comes from poverty and who works so hard to perform in her job and work, still there were certain people who could not tolerate the success and they start to pull you down. In my job, I have gone through such situations. However, my focus and intention was always to work hard. I used to work day and night to support and lift up my family. I would like to highlight few experiences, which as a girl that I had faced in my job:

- *Worked for an organization (will not mention the name of the organization) where I used to work as an Executive Assistant in a contract job for 3years. In the job role, I had a line manager whom I used to report. I used to take care of my managers' work. However, at last he removed me from my job without me doing anything wrong. (He had some problem with his own line manager, and he knew that he also will not stay long in that organization. So, he removed me saying that he wanted a more experienced person. Even though I was working with him for 2 years, he wanted more experience). Although I took this in a positive way, I had lots of tension like - if I don't have the job then I cannot pay the rent for house and the owner would ask me and my family to vacate the house. And again, I had to take short term contract jobs. Don't know how much mental suffering I had while working in this organization. Literally an employee once blasted at me using slang words. I still tolerated and remained calm because I needed a job.*
- *Another instance: I just started to work with my new manager, who had recently joined the team. It was during this time my father expired. Without properly knowing what my role and my work was, he blindly said that I don't have good communication and started to abuse me in many ways. He literally made me wash the cups of team members, who drank coffee in those cups. I still did this to save my job. When he wanted the documents to be taken as print outs, I took them and placed the same in his cabin. He then used to destroy those papers in the shredder and complained that he didn't receive any printed-out documents. He consistently told me that I am not good enough and don't have good looks. Still I respected him, considering the fact that he was my manager. However, despite me discussing with him about my true-life story of how I came up to this position, he still removed me from my job. Also, one point I would like to add here is – sometimes when an employee fails to perform, few team members gives many negative inputs and plays a role to provide some more negative feedback which makes matters worse for that helpless employee. In front of me, my team members used to speak nicely but behind me many things went on. In my case I realized this on the*

last day of my job and after that I lost my interest to work in Corporates.

- *After these instances, I also landed into so many problems like did not have any work or money to lead my life properly. Then came this award from Indian Government and after this there were both advantages and disadvantages. From here, various employers did not realize the difference in my passion and profession. So, I got job offers in my hand but later they informed that the positions were on hold. Like this I lost four offers. I kept on job searching and finally could not get any job. Then, I started to earn for me and my family by doing some anchoring. I used to do small events as an anchor, where I used to get paid about Rs. 3000 in a month. Sometimes I used to get one event and there were also times where I never used to get any. During these times, i.e. in 2020, my brother also passed away on 28th Feb. My brother was my best friend and was also like my father. My brother was everything to me and I lost him. The day when he expired, I did not have a single paisa in my hand to do his rituals. When I was earning, I gave away my earnings to many who said they wanted some financial help. But when you need, they give reasons like this which I have heard on that day. Finally, someone who knew me came to me and gave me Rs. 8000 (after few months I earned and paid back this amount). My brother used to work with his friend and his name is Nanadanna. He came forward to do the rituals on that day.*



- *My search for job still did not stop. Some of my friends initially called me and comforted me by saying that they will help me to get a job. However, when I reached them and called them back, i.e. regarding their help for my job, they maintained noble silence. I still did not worry but I needed a job for living and sustaining, i.e. at least for me and my mother. Then I got a job in one hospital where my pay was Rs. 25000. This was the time period when the Corona Virus Lockdown had started. There was no public transport. I used to walk 16 kilometers from my house to this hospital every day to save Rs. 50. The situation was really very bad. Many people wrote articles about me, but I did not get any additional remuneration. I was reorganized by other states and India but not in my own state. Many TV channels interviewed me during this time.*

I did not want to give up because I wanted to prove to myself in front of those people who showed me down and treated me very badly. So, while I wrote the exams as Scribe, many students told that me that after studies there are no job for them, and they did not know what to do in the future. It was then I thought that I will start my own small-scale organization. It'll also help to create few jobs. Also, to earn something is better than earning nothing. Thus, I started to teach soap making – “Herbal Natural Soaps”. Here many visually impaired students learnt but unfortunately many of them lost their interest. One particular student, visually impaired student, decided to stick with me to do the production and meanwhile I wanted to expand my work to women in rural villages. So, I have involved them in my work and started marketing in their circles. Now, I am in search of clients to market these products. I will not give up. It might be slow, but I will reach with everyone’s help and God’s blessings.

Now my family is only me and my mother. My only aim is to keep everyone happy and help others as much as possible. To help people who are in need and spend some time voluntarily teaching slum kids, write as scribe and support in good way. Money is not everything, but it matters to lead your life. I am really thankful to few good people who really stood for me and encouraged me to do good. I really don’t want to take free money from anyone. I want to work hard and earn and then eat. This is my principle and I will continue to work hard and keep growing. Along with me, I also want the people who are with me to grow. There had been a lot of personal problems in my life. Everything cannot be discussed but I have struggled a lot to come to this stage. I do not want anyone to lose hope in life. I didn’t lose it. I always believed that I will come up one day and stand on top. There are many people who teased me, looked at

me in ways as if I am not beautiful and unworthy for anything. Despite all of these, I always kept strong and kept growing and developing.

Now with all my dreams I have started my new start up “Youth Soaps”, which we are doing with visually impaired individuals and women in rural villages. I want to build and give more opportunities to people, who are facing struggles and difficulties, like my life story, and help them to build their confidence.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvGmMPUtrTc&feature=youtu.be> this is a small video where I am talking about our “Youth Soaps”. Now, I don’t have a job. When I go as a scribe to write exams, many asks me that how will they get a job and then immediately I think of creating one job for them. I start to teach them to make herbal and zero waste soaps. I try teaching them that even if we get small amounts, we are working hard to live our life without depending on others. Support is always welcome. So, we have started making zero-waste soaps out of waste-fruit pulps, which are unrequired in fruit shops. In temples, lots of thulsi and rose and other flowers are wasted and we collect these flowers and do soaps. In hotels, we see many vegetables which are good and useful for skin, we collect them and do the soaps and sell.

I am also sharing few online links, i.e. where my life stories and achievements and work has been discussed.

<https://www.thebetterindia.com/175115/bengaluru-woman-differently-abled-scribe-nari-shakti-puraskar/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pushpa_Preeya

<https://www.indianwomenblog.org/meet-pushpa-nm-who-has-written-over-700-exams-for-people-with-disabilities/>

<https://thelogicalindian.com/exclusive/pushpa-preeya-scribe-nari-shakti-puraskar/>

<https://zeenews.india.com/bengali/tags/n-m-pushpa.html>

<https://yourstory.com/socialstory/2019/03/bengaluru-scribe-exam-visually-impaired-tpk8l0ipz9>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuNZwWBd7m4&t=95s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gedokn2OePk&t=65s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gy3WiydAcY> ”

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Website Link of this Story: <https://livingvirtuously.in/inspirational>