

Being an Indian at heart, I have always embraced religion and god, hence in my story I have replaced the names of my friends by the “Gods” they believe in.

I started my vulnerable state of life 6 months ago in London. On my first day I was completely zoned out. City had come up with a key competition for freshers. I got shortlisted among the top three and then we had to gather votes to win a hefty apple voucher. I went all in and made the best of this opportunity to use this as an ice breaker to talk to people. I remember running from one corner to another and talking to hundreds of people in 2 days and asking them to vote for me. This was not it, I met “Radha” (Indian god) who suggested me to go in the metro train and ask people to vote for me. Without giving a second thought, I went to Barbican station, entered the first train I saw, stood between 2 coaches, and said, “Hey guys, I am a student and I have been selected for best post in a contest but need votes to win, can you please vote for me?”. I was surprised by the kindness present all over the world. People voted for me! I won the competition by 600 votes and this initiative by the college boosted my confidence a lot! Next, I volunteered to model for Bayes’ promotional photoshoot, where I met “Dola” (Slavic god) who taught me how to pick opportunities’ college offers. Throughout the day, she taught me everything about how I can gain fame in the university. Keeping this in mind, I took a chance by applying for the post of course representative, and boom! I become representative with “Borvo” (Scottish god) from whom I learnt how brave Scottish people are! We had frequent debates on various topics, but he taught me how to stick to your point while debating. This later was very useful to me when I stood in the elections. To be honest, I learned how campaigning in UK is beautifully different from that in India. I gave up quick to learn from my competitor in the election for future, “Aphrodite” (Greek goddess). A bold personality who taught me expression. She knew articulation as she was pursuing her masters in politics. She taught me how to gracefully accept rejection and move on. Talking about her culture she taught me how Greece’s culture is collectivist, and she has been taught how to take people to heights with her rather than pulling them down. All these lessons were vague to me until “Hari” (Indian god) walked in and taught me the importance of reflecting to the society. Being a British Indian, she knew both cultures and understood what exactly I was feeling while learning these new reactions of people to everything. She had already integrated both the cultures and had lived in other countries. She taught me the commonalities of the cultures, which was the basic nature of human, EMOTIONS. I learned that wherever people are, whichever country or culture they belong to, humans are emotional beings. Even after the huge differences of culture which makes it challenging to fit students

in the same environment, Bayes leverages emotions to maintain a healthy environment for all the students from various culture to grow together. I had two preconceptions when I moved to London. Firstly, that I will face a lot of racism. Secondly, the negative image of Pakistani people because of the tuffs between the countries. But I never faced racism because of the strict college rules, and I managed to make Pakistani friends and at Bayes. We gel so well, that we never thought of each other as citizens of rival countries. Another challenge was that of difference in teaching pattern, as compared to UK, Asian education system is much more based on learning as compared to application, but Bayes integrated this difference by teaching all the students from the basics to fit in their education system. I really appreciate the universities effort to inculcate all the cultures and to work on maintaining respect for all. For instance, the islamophobia awareness month was organised to educate people and to empower the minority groups. City integrates LGBTQ group from all the parts of the world and encourages a respectful environment. Students here are divided by culture but united by emotions is what I feel, the way students supported each other in war like situation is what teaches me the importance of basic emotions which every human feels regardless of collective aggression of the country which causes wars. It was not a couple of grandiose lessons but rather a dozen of small observations that led to minor twists and turns in my perspective of viewing life. Considering the game of life on a carrom board, my decision of choosing Bayes, the striker's hit, and all those angled deflections hopefully will lead to pocketing of those carrom men.