

The beginning of life

A story - one might say – is something that fascinates, intrigues, and leaves something behind. What is left behind might be of great significance, or something which completely lacks interest. Not all stories are great. Many are left unnoticed, disappearing at a glimpse of an eye. Others manage to sustain longevity, to go down in history, to raise voices and opinions. At the end of the day, all stories comprise of the same element; they highlight and document a journey – physical or spiritual, or maybe both. We might also argue that remarkable stories contain the absence dull moments within this journey. After all, we as human beings seek excitement in everything, thus we can hardly attain anything of mundane nature. I will not keep you any long with this, so here is my own story, which highlights the journey of what I call “*the beginning of life*”.

You may wonder “why did you choose this title, you are 25 years in this world”. Let me start with this. Born and raised in Athens, Greece. From an early age, I remember telling myself “this is not the place for you, you have to leave”. A feeling conquered me everyday, from the moment I woke up, until the last second I awaited sleep. It is a feeling that cannot be properly described with words, but you get that feeling when you feel quite odd, or similarly, out of place. It is that childhood spark that was cultivated inside me - to explore the world - like it had suddenly vanished.

I spent five years studying Psychology. After I completed my studies, I find myself in a diverging path. “Shall I leave, or shall I stay?”. I think you guessed correctly. And here I am. 21st of September, year 2022, arrived in Heathrow Terminal 2. What took for me to be in that airplane was like a free solo climb to El Capitan, but this is a story for another time. So, I arrive in London, surrounded by a bittersweet feeling. I was extremely anxious, since I’ve already missed two weeks of induction. My heart starts beating fast. “How are you going to meet people? How are you going to navigate to the city? To your classes?”. “No!”, I said, and put everything aside. What I felt at that moment was dreamlike, like a sense of empowerment out of nowhere. But there is a reason behind everything, and that feeling was not just a coincidence. Within the first 24 hours that I am in London, I feel like I am alive. I feel like I dream again, I feel like this is my city. It was like suddenly my perception had changed. I set aside my fears, and the boundaries I had created in my mind. I start to envision my future, my career, my everyday life. This is the city I want to be part of! This is the city that I am going to develop myself, to become a better person. Couple of weeks later comes the reality check. I see the competition, I see the skills and abilities that people have, everyone around me. “Now you have to work”. I quickly realized that if I want my dreams to come true, I must evolve. And this is one of the major reasons why I fell in love with the city – it changed me.

Stepping out of my comfort zone was a huge milestone. What really facilitated this change was not merely meeting new people but working with new people. First day of classes, I meet my group, to which I was randomly allocated, since I was completely lost. It is funny, because out of an unexpected circumstance, I received what I asked for – a challenge to evolve. Our group comprised of five people, from completely

different backgrounds. It was not easy from the beginning. We had our difficulties, mostly in communication matters. There was tension, since deadlines approached. From being on the edge of breaking apart, suddenly “Congratulations, you successfully won the MarkStrat Simulation – Team Hamlet”.

“Victory”, I said. But it is not the victory that matters. It is all the things that each and one of us learned from each other. From the tiniest detail, to the most meaningful lessons - mutual respect, commitment and dedication, virtue. I could not exchange the time spent with those people for anything, because I learned. And in fact, Bayes may be a business school, that will provide individuals with the necessary skills to proceed into a later stage of their life. But yet again, it depends on how your perception is reflected upon circumstances. For me, Bayes is more than a business school – it is a life school. And when I mean life, I mean that within that short time frame at Bayes, the things I learn about myself, the world, and others is something that I had not yet experienced in my 25 years of life. Bayes showed me - like Homer in his Odyssey - that the journey is far most important than the destination.