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# David and Goliath

*Underdogs, Misfits and the Art of battling Giants*

*Malcolm Gladwell*

O Wow an immediate connection was made with the book. I like to read fairy tales and mythological stories, this book interested me a lot. As a kid how I used to be fascinated by the heroic acts of underdogs. Same as the case in most of our Hindi movies that we love to watch, our hero alone with no support killing the villain with a huge army.

In David and Goliath, Malcolm Gladwell challenges how we think about obstacles and disadvantages, offering a new interpretation of what it means to be discriminated against, or cope with a disability or suffer from any number of other apparent setbacks. I liked the style of the author to connect the statistics and the data with education.

*“Much of what we consider valuable in our world arises out of these kinds of lopsided conflicts, because the act of facing overwhelming odds produces greatness and beauty...” (Pg- 6)*

Haven't we experienced this one or the other time in our lives? Yes, Every day, I guess, and if we had put up a fight like David, we definitely emerge as a winner.

Yes that is very truly said by the author, when he says,

*“To play by David's rules you have to be desperate...” (Pg-25)*

This statement makes me think that how can us as educators, through our teaching practices help our students to face all the odds and emerge as a winner. How can we develop in them a habit to be satisfied by only the best. As rightly said by Ron Berger in his book ' An Ethics of Excellence'

*Work of excellence is transformational. Once a student sees that he or she is capable of quality, of excellence, that student is never quite the same. There is a new self-image, a new notion of possibility. There is an appetite for excellence. After students have had a taste of excellence, they're never quite satisfied with less.(Pg.8)*

Being an Accountancy teacher, I feel David and Goliath is really a business parable, especially for entrepreneurs, because it's all about being disagreeable. This book is ultimately about how the underdogs who come out on the top are the ones who change the rules and use new technologies to upset the status quo.

Yes, Gladwell explains that people really don't think the underdogs are playing fair. But might they not perfectly describe some of our most revered business leader's path to motivation? Just to mention a few out of many, Steve Jobs, he is the definition of disagreeable. He changed the rules and the game. And yes, the industry followed him. At home front, Dhirubhai Ambani, do I need to say anything about him?

One more line from the book that makes me think is –

*Do you know the easiest way to raise people's scores on the test? Make it just a little bit harder.... (pg 74)*

Reading the book, the author makes us feel that how we as educators can affect the learning of our students. This also raises a question in my mind is our assessment system fair enough for our students? The same question paper for all the students- are we assessing them on proper basis?

The author has an interesting style of writing. He is an incredible story teller, and uses that ability to convey his points and thereafter the way he connects it with the education field. Two of the many stories mentioned in this book were particularly interesting - the story of Caroline Sucks and the dyslexic lawyer.

*Caroline Sacks was asked what major she would be if she went to her second option. "I'd still be in science."*

This story questions our attitude towards the choice of educational institutions for our children. The Big Pond as in the book takes really bright students and demoralizes them. The expectations and the burden of proving oneself prove devastating. The benefit of being in a Little Pond is the freedom that is given. It's in the little pond that maximizes your chance to do whatever you want.

*"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man."(Pg 80)*

Dyslexia does not necessarily make people more open, but what the disorder might possibly do is make it a little bit easier to be disagreeable. It might make it so that the individual adapts the world to himself.

Dyslexia in general is a difficult disorder to have. Many people are not able to adapt and use the disadvantage to their benefit. But Dyslexia— in the best of cases— forces you to develop a skill that might otherwise remain dormant. It might make you do things you would have never considered.

David and Goliath is about the underdogs, the misfits. It is about those perceived disadvantages to be actual advantages. Being the alpha male, or the alpha dog, in scenarios isn't necessarily about being the strongest or the smartest. It is about having the best set of tools/skills for that given environment.