

Success story: Reshma:

Hello to all those who are reading this story of mine. My name is Reshma, I'm 32 years old and I hail from the most resplendent and colourful country on Planet Earth called India. I studied to become a nurse and at present, I work in Qatar in the Middle East.

My story is undeniably different from most people you would meet and I'm delighted it is that way. If I began to go into details, I could certainly write an entire book!



I was about 2 years old when my mother had no choice but to put me in a home for children as she couldn't financially support me. The home - called the Shishu Mandir Home - was a paradise for all of us. It's actually indescribable! We were girls and boys living together of diverse age groups, including babies. Dr Hella Mundhra whom we lovingly called 'Mama' was everything to us: a mother, a guiding star, a mentor, a teacher, a protector, a caring and lovable person. The wisdom and flexibility that we learned from her was infinite. She taught us plenty of activities like crochet, knitting, gardening, cursive writing, sewing, swimming, singing, making puzzles and most importantly, conversing in English.

She disliked it when she noticed a child sitting idle or hanging around, doing nothing. She would guide us towards the right path and set logical rules for us to strictly follow. For example, we were required to close the mesh windows every evening to prevent mosquitoes from entering the house. Winter and summer clothes had to be kept separately. Anybody who was caught not wearing a sweater during the winter season would definitely be punished by her and later mocked by the elders!

Those days were just so amazing! We were all very close to the Shishu aunties who would take care of us just like their own children. All the scoldings we received was borne of their love and concern for us - we understand that now. For me, there isn't a day I don't think about Shishu Home: our beautiful, green home. I stayed there until I was about 19 years old and later had to leave to begin my nursing career.

One of the main reasons I decided to become a nurse was Mama. I remember I was in the 10th standard, and she was addressing all of us during the morning assembly. She said that she would like her children to either become teachers, social workers or doctors. That's when I thought about nursing. After I completed my 12th standard (which wasn't easy, mind you!) I got a seat in a reputed nursing college. I didn't realise that this meant that I would actually have to leave my home. The thought hadn't sunk in. All I felt was that I was about to go on a new adventure. It was only after joining college that I began to realise that I wouldn't be able to meet my friends, the kids or the aunties of my home.

Life in the Nursing Hostel couldn't have been more disparate from my picturesque Shishu home. The beds weren't as radiantly clean as ours, we had very little water, we had to follow rules that we could never think of breaking. The hostel wasn't as plush or spacious as our Shishu home. The food wasn't as delicious - our Shishu aunties always cooked with love. We didn't have the liberty to go out of the campus, we always had to enter our names and details in a book and were allowed very few outings and overnight stays. It was a roller-coaster ride, but I had to keep going to live up to the expectations that my Shishu family had from me.

Whenever I got the opportunity for an overnight stay, I wouldn't miss it. I wanted to meet my friends and the aunties at Shishu as much as I could. Each time we met it was so exciting to catch up on our lives and the various fields we were working in. I am proud to say that I did well in my nursing studies and received the Best Clinical Nurse award on my graduation day.

I started working in the hospital attached to my college and came across various patients with all kinds of ailments. That world was something else - taking care of the sick. I learnt so much from the doctors, senior nurses, junior nurses and my colleagues. I worked in the Antenatal, Postnatal and Newborn Care, all of which gave me immeasurable experience and wisdom. I completed the service period that was required by my nursing college and moved in with my mother, as I had begun earning and could support her.

I'm thankful to her for bringing me to the Shishu home and not anywhere else. I decided to come to Qatar as I longed to explore another place. Things fell into place and I landed here. All of us must have experienced this at some point in our lives - pieces of a puzzle just falling into place.

My journey here in Qatar has been amazing - a peek into the Arab world! Thanks to the opportunity to mingle and communicate with people of different nationalities, I have been able to gain insight on human beings.

I feel blessed that I chose to be a nurse. I don't think I would have excelled as I have, or found my true calling in a different field. The satisfaction I feel in taking care of the sick cannot be put into words. For me, my nursing career is one of the biggest achievements of my life. It is because of Mama and my sponsor parents, the Daniels in Germany, who gave me the privilege to pursue my ambition and enabled me to be independent. I'm thoroughly indebted to them and of course, to the Shishu aunties who have constantly been there for me and the others through thick and thin. This is just a tiny description of our heavenly abode and my afterlife. I hope you liked reading it!