INSIDE THE SOUL OF A FIGHTER

Life-altering events began at a very early age for you. Tell us about how your journey began.

I was initially diagnosed with hypothyroidism, at only six months old. From there I was still a child when doctors discovered at a least in my aortic valve. The doctors tried everything they could to put off replacing the valve as long as they could, but eventually my heart couldn't wait. I needed the replacement. Just a few months after this surgery, some blockages were discovered in my heart which lead to a bypass surgery. A few glorious years passed by, before a car accident at 27 left me with immense pain in my hips. It was discovered that I had avascular necrosis, which is basically the death of bone tissue because of the lack of blood supply. Still, I'm keeping a positive outlook in spite of the pain and I'm coping on the excitement of the success of my blood related books, Inside the Head of Hope and Flying Without Wings, and looking towards the future as I write other books.

Such grave medical challenges at such a young age would stump anyone. Did you ever feel like giving up?

There were times, yes, especially early on, when I thought that I had no choice but to give up. It's hard to be strong every day, especially when the guarantee of healing and getting "better" is not there. When faced with a lot of physical pain the body can only handle so much. But there was always a voice within me that told me that the road is stronger and I can see through when you think there is no other way. I can't always explain it, the moment that I knew there would be a light at the end of the tunnel. But even before I chose joy, it chose me, and helped me through my darkest nights. After some of the darkest points in my life, it's hard to look at the current challenges I'm facing and think that I should give up. After all, I didn't give up as a child, and now I am an adult. Hopes and times with a sunny outlook are a life that is sometimes dark. There is no question, I know that I can handle whatever life throws at me.

"We introduce... A Man Beyond the Scourge

INTALKWITH
RISHABH PURI
Entrepreneur & Author

For a young child, grief and disappointments are not easy to understand or process. How did you go about seeing sense through it all?

I don't remember the first time that I knew that I was different, from other children, because my normal was doctor's offices and hospital beds. I was in and out so often that it became routine for me. It was both and painful and scary at points. Treatments, diagnoses, shots, and therapies, and daily deliveries of medication and good and bad news. But I think growing up in an environment where good days were not the guarantee, I developed a lot of resilience to get me through the bad ones until there was hope on the horizon again. Even when the diagnosis was grim, my outlook didn't have to be. Without the guarantee of living to a ripe old age, I could decide for myself, my days may be limited.

How did you 'train' your mind to stay above the constant challenges through this journey?

I think that discipline is key to a successful life, and that developing discipline and resilience is something that anyone, despite of their station and suffering in life, can do. It takes one moment of strength, even in the middle of sorrow, to decide for yourself, "no, I won't feel this way, I can feel better, than I will." Even if you feel that you are trapped in the middle of tenure, that one thought can open a door that will let you out of that pain and send you on the path towards hope. From there, I noticed my mind with images of happiness, and joy, taking the situation I was living in and imagining the best possible outcome.

Tell us about your experience of writing the books you have written and might write in the future?

I was a writer for years before I ever went about seeking publication. At first it was just the hard I would be having into going through sadness and confusion, a way of laying out my thoughts and interpreting them through verses and in a prose whatever I came face to face with confession and doubt (but as I began talking with my friends and family and I came across people who thought my story was worth telling to the world, I gained the inspiration to push myself to the "pick of writing for others. I was hard at first and I didn't know entirely what I was doing. Writing isn't just an art, it's a craft one has to improve upon.

Do you find the process of writing therapeutic?

I find it immensely healing. I think that with a life where physical health is not assured, I like to on optimizing the mental and spiritual health that I have, and writing is the best harder for sadness and troublesomeness. Risking my identity over the internet and sharing my words and prose over various forums, that picked up with a snap of the finger. So, I wouldn't agree that it is therapeutic. It is, to its own way, a life sharing practice for me.

So, are you ever faced with a bad day?

I would say that there are no bad days. If you wake up and there's breath in your lungs, that right there is a night and a reason to celebrate. There are days when I wake up and I feel immense pain, when I receive news that my body is not healing the way I would like. Watching the news, every day could be a bad day if I choose to let it be. But instead, I choose to focus on the goodness in humanity, the joy in small moments every day, the little pleasures of a good meal or a good book or an hour spent laughing with family and friends. Even in your darkest hour, there's enough light to illuminate your way forward. You just have to think about it.

You are an entrepreneur and an author, how do you manage your time to concentrate on both effectively?

It all comes down to priorities. I prioritize my work and my writing, and I chose it. If I wasn't so write, I'll find the time to do so. If I didn't, I'm sure I'll find a great excuse not to write, and we wouldn't be having this conversation. But I crave sitting at the keyboard and hitting the record flow form. Sometimes I'll be working and my characters will be working through their own problems in my head. By the time I have a moment free to write, the scene is already written. I just have to write it down.

On the 42nd anniversary issue, which has the theme for Young Indians, what would be your message to our readers?

No matter what your circumstances, face them with the sort of unbreakable bravery that comes from believing that life is fundamentally good. Hope is a weapon against worry and pain. Laughter can combat any illness or misfortune. Quiet and peace are so much for the unprecedented light of happiness that comes from time spent with family and friends. Love really does conquer all.

What's next for you?

I'm excited to see what happens next. This isn't something I'm doing for money or fame, just to reach people with the message of hope that lives within me and has gotten me through so many dark nights. I hope to take the profits from these books and use them to anonymously fund travel surprises for people less fortunate than I have been. In hopes that they will see miracles happen in their own lives and that all the good that has been done to me will manifest itself in others.