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 **The Art Of Freedom**

Freedom is a term that can be defined in various ways depending on the person. I believe that freedom is a way to express yourself in any way you like it. The determination and dedication are set through when one knows the motive to chase in their life. The key to stepping up to freedom is having a positive mindset and being optimistic all the way through. It is not guaranteed that it will be easy to attain but patience is significant at all times. For example, Malcolm X did not have the essential tools to learn but yet he still pushed himself even though he was in jail. It did stop him just because he was in jail. For him to self teach himself it must be an important step he had to take in his entire life. I agree that confinement, ultimately, is more mental/spiritual rather than physical.

Confinement may keep someone physically imprisoned but mentally it’s a whole new different way looking at it. With the example of Malcolm X, we can assure that the circumstance he was in may not be the best to be but his perseverance allowed him to set a goal and chasing it until it was successful. He would endlessly read from the dictionary and copy the words down for him to expand his vocabulary. Later he would write so that he can get practice into making his writing straight and also work on the punctuations. The motivation he had for him to self teach makes a tremendous impact after he was out of jail. This shows how even though he was not literally free, it did not stop him from learning, and that depicts what freedom was like for him.

In addition, for me finding freedom was quite difficult in time and the process. It all started when my family got visas to move to America. Therefore, growing up the youngest in the family, I never received the privilege my older siblings had since I was forced to maintain a perfect image for my parents. It was also very tough growing up; sometimes I would have to skip meals in the hope to help my parents save some money. I remember crying endlessly as I saw my father's shadow streaming off, getting ready to leave for work before the sun even rose. I never got the chance to hear his comforting voice saying goodbye as he left in chase of hope and financial security. However, that didn’t hinder me from chasing my dream.

Therefore, as time passed, my interest and fascination for computer hardware increased. I had no money to invest in tools to learn the skills of hardware, so I turned to software. I knew that software would be a great starting point because it correlates with hardware. Software is mostly free, so I would study endlessly in the hopes that the moment would come where I could apply my skills. I would sit in front of my sister’s computer after she had gone to sleep and stare at the screen, learning to code.

I would sit for so long, the water in my eyes would start drying up, making me feel an uproaring irritation on my sclera. Some days I would apply eye drops because my eyelids could hardly close after such long hours of concentrated learning with trial and error. I had a hard time learning, so I decided to join programs to teach me coding. I never had mentorship, so I thought it would be a great learning experience. It was very competitive getting accepted to programs because the seats were limited and the essays I would have to write had to convince them why they should acknowledge me. After the application process, they interviewed me and wanted to see my dedication and future goals to see if I'm a strong applicant for the program.

In addition, I got accepted to one and decided to join Code Now (Practical, applicable, hands-on learning program) to gain valuable skills. It was tough; I was scared and nervous, shaking to meet professionals in the work field. At first, I felt like I was not fitting in because of my race and background, also my confidence level dropped and so many questions were arising in my head. I had no idea how to react because of the fact that it was my first time getting exposed to something I really thought that was out of my level. Due to my confidence level, I could not participate nor share my thoughts in the discussions. It took me quite a while to get comfortable and engage with the others; I finally realized that I’m wasting this opportunity that was given to me because through this other doors will open to further enhance my skills and knowledge that can possibly help me later on. I ended up getting to network with them and students who had similar mindsets. After finishing the workshop, I left with a certificate and the confidence of being able to conquer bigger programming languages. Through this program, I managed to build my confidence level to a greater extent in which next time if I’m in a situation similarly I could react differently and positively.

In conclusion, the solution to finding freedom is different for everybody. However, if the mentality is set to a goal than anything can be possible. In my situation, coming to America changes my fate, since I now have hope I’m optimistic about all the hard work that I’m putting in and will hopefully payback soon. Unlike my country, the government here wants students to be educated therefore they provide students with financial aid so that they can pursue college and live the “American dream”. This helps the majority of the students because the tuition price is really high and it would be very tough for a student to pay all of that. I can perceive that I’m the only person that has the control of my future and I will try my best to achieve the life that I have always desired for. The step to having freedom for me was to realize what is that I want and how my mentality had to be shaped in order for the outcome to be sustained.