

A RENOWNED NEUROLOGIST

DR. SWETA ADATIA

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AFTER THE BRAIN MAPPING WORKSHOP which was presented by Dr. Sweta Adatia, we the reporters of MSSSP Life Magazine were very excited but nervous to talk to her personally. Talking to her was just like a dream come true. We started with the introduction, and sought her permission to start with the interview. Aditi, Mansi, Sukhnoor and I (Gurleen) were the reporters.

So, we started with the interview and asked her several questions which are as following: -

Mansi: First of all, can you please tell us something about your school life?

Dr. Sweta: I studied in St. Ann's High School in Gujarat and did my 12th from St. Xavier's. In school I was very studious and played a lot. I was a table tennis player and aimed to stand first in class. Mine was a very good school and I had fantastic teachers.

Gurleen: Was it difficult for you to manage both sports and academics?

Dr. Sweta: No, I always had a stratified number of hours for sports, studying and outing. So, everything was planned.

Gurleen: Did you ever feel that you were not able to complete the goals you had decided?

Dr. Sweta: No, once you plan out your work and work out your plan, it gets easier for you to achieve your goal and it has always been with me.

Aditi: Mam, please tell us one of the most memorable experience of your life.

Dr. Sweta: Most memorable experience.... There are many but the most memorable that I still cherish is when I met my spiritual teacher Swamini Vimlayananda from Chinmaya mission. She is my spiritual guide and teacher. I think meeting her the very first time was the most memorable ever. After that I had travelled with her for 20 long years but I still remember the day very vividly when I met her.

Sukhnoor: Where do you basically belong to?

Dr. Sweta: I'm basically from the state of Gujarat. Saurashtra is my home town.

Gurleen: What are your hobbies?

Dr. Sweta: My hobbies are creating something new, I love to make some tests for students. I love creating stuff for you students which can be made available on your computers. So, creativity is one, second is of course playing table tennis, I like cooking and love reading also.

Mansi: What are your strengths and weaknesses? **Dr. Sweta:** So, my strength is in L1 that means I can plan what I visualize from the R2 and then implement it, make a roll map or a blue print of how I'm going to implement. I always do it with small actions and make it till the goal is not achieved. These are my strengths while my weaknesses are that I often cross the deadline. Sometimes I become slow, sometimes lazy and sometimes I might not be doing any work.

Aditi: At what age did you decide to become a stroke neurologist?

Dr. Sweta: According to me there are two types of careers i.e. arranged and loved career. So, in arranged career you choose according to your parents but, in loved career you choose according to yourself and for me it was purely an arranged one. But when I went into medicine, I started liking Neurology somehow, but what happened with me was that after MBBS, I had to do post graduate degree i.e. MD and I was very clear that I didn't want to go into surgery so what remained with me was only medicine. During medicine, in the last year I had to represent a lot of cases and every time I would end up in having a neurological case and I was not good at it. So, my roommate, who always wanted to be a neurologist and had high aspirations, was absolutely well trained in Master's Program for Neurology. So, when I came back to the room everyday, she would teach me. That is how, I started to improving my case presentations and then I wrote a book on

Neurology. For six months, I took extra time after my post-graduation. When I wrote the book, I came to know more about Neurology and found the structure of the brain very interesting and that's how I chose Neurology. After neurology...you know what a stroke is? It's a brain attack and paralysis. That is the only thing that you can correct in Neurology. I found it very interesting and that's when I decided to become a stroke neurologist.

Sukhnoor: Did you find it hard?

Dr. Sweta: Yes, of course, it was very hard, all throughout. You have to read a lot; you have to be on your toes all the time. In fact, when I did my stroke fellowship, in Canada, in Calgary, we used to cater 42 satellite centers and ours was the only university hospital to do that. So, at night, one of us had to be awake to cater 42 centers. We received 10-20 stroke patients each night. So, it's very hard to work in such bad weather conditions with -40 degree Celsius.

Gurleen: What do you like the most about being a neurologist?

Dr. Sweta: The only thing that I like about brain is that it is an interesting entity to be worked on. I don't like to fix broken brains but I like to ignite the normal brains. So, like you, you all are bubbling with new ideas, enthusiasm, so, giving you the right direction, is my passion.

Mansi: Who supported you the most in being a neurologist?

Dr. Sweta: My parents supported me the most. They were very patient. When you are studying for so many years and you are not even earning money.... So, I think my parents supported me the most in becoming a

neurologist

Gurleen: Why is the brain divided into four parts?

Dr. Sweta: As you know that the brain is divided into four parts, then we see the little limbic system and the quartex, so it becomes four. There is no real boundary. It's a metaphoric model. This is what scientists have seen over the time. So, the L1, L2, R1, R2 is the language which is given by the psychologists. There is no part in the brain that is called L1, but it's linguistics.

In order to understand the fight between the brain, we performed an activity. In the activity we were given 10 seconds to write a sentence "Today is Wednesday" with both right and left hand. As all of us were right-handed, we were able to complete the sentence quickly but writing with left hand was quite difficult for us.

From the activity we learned that what we do repeatedly, becomes dominant. Idea is to know that dominance. Otherwise, we spend whole life without knowing what we are doing. With hands, it's easier to know the dominance.

Aditi: What is the effect of brain on our behavior?

Dr. Sweta: Our brain has a very important effect on our behaviour. Mind thinks and the brain performs and that's how we act. So, thoughts always pre receive the action. Sometimes the thinking process is automatic. Every time we don't realize that we are thinking, too. So, behavior is justified by the brain first, then by the mind and then by the values and beliefs.

Sukhnoor: What is the connection between healthy nutrition and strong brain?

Dr. Sweta: Nutrition is not only important for strong brain but also for strong body. Whatever you eat, converts into proteins, carbohydrates and then they get converted into small building blocks called amino acids. They basically form a cell. When we eat a lot of junk food, not giving any nutrition, what will happen is that the cells don't form. So, if you have a brain without cells, what is the use? Active cells, healthy cells, performing cells form only when you eat healthy food like fresh fruits, vegetables, good proteins and you maintain good balance between proteins and carbohydrates.

Gurleen: What advice would you like to give to the budding neurologists?

Dr. Sweta: Neurology in India is a damn required profession. We have only 3,500 neurologists whereas the population of the country is 1.25 billion. So, more and more people doing Neurology are required. Of course, it is a long road, but students should pursue Neurology.