



**Ponmythili
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May is here and the Board exam results are out. Your phone is buzzing with calls from relatives and your parents are fielding calls from people you barely remember. Everyone wants to know how you did. Before you answer that, can we pause for a moment? Not to avoid the question, but to ask a better one: what is a result, really?

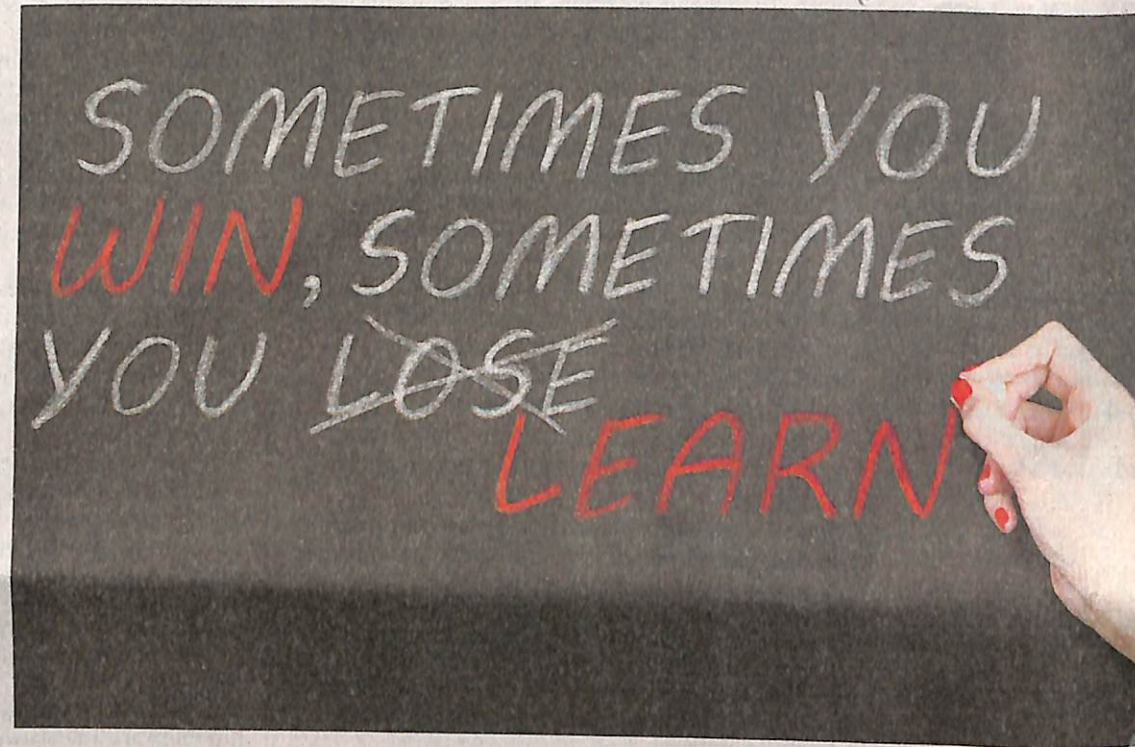
Think of it like a milestone on a highway. It tells you where you are right now, not where you are going; definitely not who you are. When you see a board that says 500 km to Chennai, it is just a marker. It does not tell you if Chennai is even where you want to go. What matters is what you do when you reach it.

Clues to yourself

If you did well in the exam, enjoy it. But do not stop there. Did you find your own way of understanding things? Did you stay consistent when it got tiring? Was there a subject you genuinely enjoyed? These are clues, not just about exams, but about you.

Each of us has what I like to call a power zone. It is that space where the way your mind naturally works meets something the world actually needs.

Some people make complicated things simple without trying. Some carry 10 moving



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Beyond the marksheet

As board exam results season begins, an educator reflects on what marks mean and how to deal with success and failure

parts in their head without dropping any. Some are the person everyone calls when a conflict needs sorting.

These are not soft skills. These are the engines that run careers and lives.

However, if you did not do well, stay with me. An exam you did not clear is not a wall. It is a question: what happened here? Not "am I a failure?" Because that is

a story you are telling yourself. Instead, ask "What did this exam expect from me? Where did I fall short?"

Was it time-management? A gap in understanding? Anxiety taking over? Each has a different answer.

Own both

Panic will not help you find it, but an honest question will. Own both the win and the miss. If

you did well, do not brush it aside saying you were lucky. A win you do not accept does not teach you anything. If you did not do well, own that too. Not to be hard on yourself but to stay in control of what comes next. The moment you start blaming the paper or the situation, you give away your ability to change things. The gap it shows will stay until you are willing

to look at it.

If success goes to your head, it makes you careless. If failure goes to your heart, it makes you shrink. What you need is for both to reach your mind. However, be careful of quick fixes.

After the results are declared, there will be a lot of advice: do a course. Take a certification. Try something else. Some of this may genuinely help.

But, sometimes, it is just a way to avoid a difficult question. If you move on without understanding why you struggled, the same pattern will repeat itself. The real question is not just "what next?" but "what am I building towards?"

Here is something we do not talk about enough. Many people go through life without asking what they are

good at. It is easier to compare marks, colleges, placements. But that is someone else's measure, not yours.

What comes naturally to you? What do you enjoy? What makes you lose track of time? If you do not know yet, it is okay.

Look at where the world is heading, then look at what you are drawn to. Where those two meet is a good place to begin. You do not need perfect clarity. You just need direction.

A word to parents. Your child's result is not your report card. When we make it about our own image, we add to the pressure they are already carrying. What they need is someone who can stay calm and say "this is one moment. I see you beyond this."

You know your score. Ask yourself what it is telling you and what it is not. The people who go on to do meaningful things are not always the ones with the highest marks. They are the ones who learned to understand themselves and keep moving forward, through both success and failure.

That confidence does not come from marks. It builds when you choose honesty over excuses and curiosity over comparison. May is a good month to begin.

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