

Manifestation of ‘Vulnerability’ and Choice in Simon Sinek’s “Together is Better” and Robert Frost’s “The Road not Taken”

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Abstract

Simon Sinek is a British-American author, who is an impactful voice in the world of leadership and the two time best-selling author, whose ideologies have captured the imagination of the eloquent contemporary leaders of the world. His book "Together Is Better" exposes the multiple aspects of vulnerability through the depiction of psychological confinements that the young millennial face. The article analyses the importance of choice and its consequence in a person's life as in "Together Is Better" and "The Road Not Taken". The works are not just astounding inspirations for the young cohorts to unlock their mind for contemplation and introspection, but also to expose them to the current complex world where there is an increasing degradation of morality and understanding among people. This article also sheds light on how the theme of choice and vulnerability exposes the readers to seek and achieve fulfilment by leading a worthy life.

Key Words: Vulnerability, Choice, Cohorts, Millennial, Consequences

Millennials are group of people born in the midst of late nineteenth century and twentieth century, sharing same interests. Young millennial generation are said to be unleadable. They are susceptible to their surroundings where they lack consciousness for imperturbability. The young generation are predominantly accentuated in aggression than giving a second thought to their responses in a particular situation. This very ideology is being connoted as ‘boldness’ by Francis Bacon, “*And yet boldness is a child of ignorance, boldness is an ill-keeper of promise.*” (28). Most of the millennials lack self-esteem and self-confidence as their self-image breaks when they are unable to meet the expectation about themselves. Degradation of self-confidence makes them an insecure generation who are reluctant to cope up with social mechanism and strategies. Modern generation including the millennials struggle to establish a deep relationship with society as they resort to smart phones and alcoholism for comfort and thus fall into the evil trenches of suicides and homicides. The resultant degeneration of behavioural enhancements can be a catalytic reaction of dopamine, a chemical evoking pleasure. Their outlook of the world is not yet ready to overcome this behavioural abnormality.

Modern people yearn to know everything effortlessly and thus lack consistency in behaviour. The absence of social mechanism and reluctance in the initiation of exuberant and enchanted ideas in turn result in mortal tediousness of millennials. In order to help out the complex young millennials, Simon Sinek through his book *Together Is Better* elucidates how the millennials can be treated in such a way to achieve their natural best instead of forcing them to follow the commonly accepted norms. He elaborates the varied dimensions of these two aspects, thereby eliciting its impact on the young millennials.

As the young generation abode in the realm of gratification, they are confined to themselves and even afraid of seeking help from the outer world. Upon entering the real world, they tend to quit easily as they are unable to fulfil the strange requirements of the external world and are not passionately attached to the outside world. If it was passion, the mere predicaments could never pose as an impediment to achieve the goal. Passion always helps to grab the end of the rope, till the very end of its stretches. The impatient nature of millennials is an obstacle in achieving their goals, as society accuses them of being proud and egoistic. Simon Sinek amplifies the idea of living life for a purpose is fulfilment, even it is a quagmire, rather than living by accidents. He answers to the young millennials who are confined in their agony of impracticability, that all of these sorrows are transient. A person is responsible for his /her blossoming happiness in their world. Sometimes the antipodal happens when the person fails to go for the things that he yearns and due to his fear in taking the accountability of his own actions. It can also be connoted as the consciousness of vulnerability residing in his own self. Therefore, vulnerability doesn't mean that the person should suppress their shackled emotions in their mind instead they should have the courage to open up their weakness in front of the society.

Millennial are afraid of being entitled and marooned by the society, which results in their reluctance to choose among the paths ahead of them. In the book *Together is Better*, the boys confront a wall and understand the necessity to climb it to continue their venture. Instead of standing idle or walking around the entire wall to find a door, they took the risk of climbing the wall. One of them had even fallen and got injured, but that was not the end of their journey. The wall can be considered as a symbol of the predicament that every person faces at least once in life. But only a few people procure the courage to climb the wall or overcome the obstacle due to the fear of vulnerability and the fear of being accused as 'entitled.' So, Simon Sinek reflects:

*“safe is good for sidewalks and swimming pools
life requires risk if we are to get anywhere” (31)*

The three friends encounter a number of impediments on their path to success such as a ferocious wolf and torrential river. One among them even faces death but never thinks about giving up. They figure out their own shortcomings and find ways to succeed rather than being pretentious. Children reveal their vulnerability as they shout for help and this helps them move forward by overcoming the impediments. Author elaborates the positive aspects of revealing vulnerability and the negative side of not revealing vulnerability by being pretentious or showing false bravery. He also suggests that an awareness of one's self and the ability to find ways to overcome fear is the need of the hour rather than being pretentious like the millennial:

“if the challenges we face doesn't scare us

then it is probably not that important” (45)

On analysing the poem "The Road Not Taken", poet exposes the narrator in a situation of quandary by making him choose between the two diverging roads in front of him. The dilemma in choosing the paths prolonged and it made the narrator in deep introspection, until he decided to choose the less travelled path by the humanity.

*“Then took the other, as just as fair
and having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear” (7, 8)*

The dilemma in choosing a right path for further travel is considered to be the main focus of this poem because this dilemma of the narrator in making a better choice is relational to the reality of every millennia's life. The poet's introduction of the longevity and the reluctance of the narrator, to choose one of the roads, is because he wants the readers to comprehend the crucial importance for 'choices' and 'consequences', in one's life. The idea of vulnerability can be seen as an irreplaceable element in the poem "The Road Not Taken" "as well as the very thing that the millennials fears to approach.

*“And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth” (3, 4, 5)*

The outstretch of narrator's contemplation on his choice at that very moment, has crucial role to play in his life. Whatever the choice he makes, will impeccably affect the narrator for the rest of his life. In "The Road Not Taken" and "Together Is Better", the impulse of vulnerability and the consequences of their choices, made them to analyse their consciousness of longevity in taking further steps. Every person in this world has stood in the shoes of dilemma before the venture, of a better option in their life. This dilemma is just the beginning of a new journey and, the accountability of choices belongs to themselves. Thus, the chosen road will determine the future of the people. Robert Frost says that the choices are inevitable because, the regret of not choosing will be a burden to one's self throughout their life. Even though the narrator in the poem "The Road Not Taken" "initially shown reluctance to choose a different path eventually he adopts a new approach by choosing the path which was less travelled by. But the choice never sprouted seed of dejection in his mind, only rejoice.

*“I took the one less travelled be
and that made all the difference” (20)*

Self- realisation is essential for a person to indulge in the external world of perplexity. The unrealistic and muddled mind has to face a lot of interrogation in the outer world. The young millennials are trapped in the current world of entanglement and they will reside there for eternity, until and unless they know the key to untangle it. 'Survival of the fittest' - a common phrase which implies that only the fittest are compatible in this world. If the motto of life was only the survival of the fittest then what kind of world would have been this? Thinking only about one's own life leads to devastation, and it will not enable them to open their hearts for selfless thoughts or emotions. This in turn leads to self- isolation and mental deterioration of

millennials. Human minds are always tangible to evilness, but some realises the trap and escapes. We always resonate to the fact that mind is the flow of thoughts, but never contemplate that it is more than just the definition. Mind is capable of doing things that people have never imagined. If mind is a resource where wonderful things emerges, why is it incapable of selfless services? Even if the person is aware of mind's capability, he or she is still reluctant to execute it because of their fear of vulnerability. Interrogation from society and the lack of capability and compatibility results in the degradation of one's self-confidence. The person will dive into the world of darkness and become an introvert, who eventually fails at his encounter with social ideologies. It is possible to change a few than to change the entire world, which will lead to a world of idealism. Before everything, he /she is responsible to know their true self. If they could conquer their minuses then they will be ready for the exposure to this world of quandary. Eventually they will be relatable, to the reality and will compatible to the people around them without doubting their self. If a person knew about his pros and cons then he will be able to open up to others especially, their weakness. After his own self-analysis and contemplations then he will open and share his ideas with others. This can be considered as the initial step to their venture to the world of family, friends colleagues eventually to the world itself.

“the ability of a group of people to do remarkable things hinges on how will those people can pull together as a team” (55)

The poem ‘The Road Not Taken’ ends with the narrator’s decision of choosing the untraveled path and his satisfaction on the decision he chose. After choosing the path, he might have met with different people and a new world where he was able to reveal and realise himself as well as his introspection that his decision was of worth. Narrator’s motive might be for the best otherwise he neither would have chosen the less travelled path nor his decision to make difference. The final stanza of the poem gave an optimistic exposure for the readers to continue their venture to make their own differences in the world. We connect the world that the narrator travelled with that of the three friends venture in the book ‘Together Is Better’. After rescuing his friend from other cocky children, they travelled to find a new world with the help of a lady. After facing many hardships on their way to the particular place, they find the place to be extremely different from that of their playground. Exuberance and joy sprouted in them when they saw this new world and taught them different things. This new exposure helped them to unlock new chapters of their book of life.

“Life is beautiful not because of the things we see or the things we do life is beautiful because of the people we met” (92)

A person who lives in a dungeon who is devoid of the ideas of external world never comes to treasure new ideas or never able to cherish the beautiful moment of their life until and unless they were being exposed to their surroundings and inhabitants. They need to expand their knowledge and experiences by meeting up with new people that will only an addition to their life. When a person learns to cooperate and communicate, they will open new sacks to lead a bunch of people in which it evokes in them a new attire of a leader. In the ‘Together Is Better’ our author Simon Sinek innovate two types of leaders who are the mirror image of the leaders of our society. In the beginning of the story readers are being introduced to a leader, who is widely visible in our millennial society, leaders who hides their deep desires of

despotism and who fails to see what others are capable of. Even if they realise the potential of their colleagues neither will they accept nor do they appreciate their talents. A person possessing these qualities will never called as a leader and never can he able to lead a group or a society into a better future. Second representation of leader is one among the three friends and the few to be witnessed in this world of millennial. He took care of his other two friends during their venture to the mysterious place. He himself stood in front of every hardship they faced. He understood the strength as well as the weakness of his friends which made him realize and analyse their potentials. When they returned, they confronted the bully friend but our leader never stood for a counterattack, instead he attempted inviting him to their group, in which other friends haven't any objections. We can witness an incident in the book where the bully boy gave his crown that he used to wear in the earlier parts of the story to our leader but he gave to his friend with the spectacles, which shows, that there is no need for a leader to lead his group with a crown. These changes in him sprouted after his visit to that mysterious place and also from the indulgent children's' there. This is an optimistic lesson for the leaders of this millennial society that, even though they are devoid of a crown, they can lead the people if he/she is an owner of a beautiful mind having the capability see the potential (strength and weakness) of others.

*“A star wants to see himself rise to the top
A leader wants to see those around him become stars”* (111)

In both works authors want their readers to go after the things that they yearn for the most in their life, through which they can bring differences to this world as well as their life. They prompt the readers to cherish and treasure their life by establishing and happiness. Narrator in the poem ‘The Road Not Taken’ and the boy in “Together Is Better”, try to arouse the readers from their deep slumber of confinements by identifying their potential pace. It is almost impossible to change the world into an idealistic one all of a sudden, but to evoke the changes in small number of people can be an initial step or a mile stone to create an idealistic world filled with happiness.

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