

The beginning of improvement

Try is a simple, three-letter word, yet its impact can be life-changing, helping people unearth their true passions. The saying, “If you don't try, you'll never learn and find your life's passion,” holds true. After high school graduation, I found myself lost, unsure of my future direction. I decided to pursue Medical School, convinced it was my destined path. I resolved to embrace it fully. However, the passion I sought didn't materialize within medicine. Nevertheless, I excelled academically, earning acceptance into the Arabia's Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC) scholarship program. This opportunity prompted the realization I finally found my calling in Environmental Engineering here at the University of Delaware as an international student.

The SABIC Environmental Engineering program is hosted only by select U.S. language programs, and UD's English Language Institute (ELI) is one. This journey has proved both challenging and exhilarating, as I had never traveled alone before. It has been an opportunity for me to evolve into a better, more independent, and more organized version of myself. Initially, I had fears about societal integration and forming connections with Americans. To my surprise, the bonds formed were significantly different from my expectations. The care and concern exhibited by those in my new surrounding made me feel cherished, fostering a familial atmosphere. However, before this, there were many stereotypes towards Saudi women that I have tried to change.

Many Americans often hold misconceptions about Saudi Arabia, particularly regarding its treatment of women and their rights. It's crucial to dispel these misconceptions. Saudi Arabia

is in fact actively working to support women in various aspects of life, including education. I am a living example of this support, having received a scholarship that has allowed me to pursue my studies in the United States and build a decent life for myself. In recent years, Saudi Arabia has made significant progress in women's rights, with policies promoting gender equality, ensuring women's equal pay relative to their male counterparts, and providing them with the same opportunities. While there are still challenges, it's important to recognize the ongoing efforts in Saudi Arabia to empower women and challenge stereotypes that may not reflect the current reality. Now that I'm studying and living here, this is my golden opportunity to improve the image of my country and change the stereotypes associated with it.

As a Saudi student at the University of Delaware, I believe it's essential for international students to be conscious of their behavior, recognizing that it serves as a reflection of their home country. Embracing and proudly sharing their customs and traditions is crucial, as these cultural elements are an integral part of their identity. Rather than feeling ashamed, international students should view their unique heritage as an opportunity to enrich the cultural tapestry of the university community and beyond. By openly embracing and sharing their traditions, they not only foster cross-cultural understanding but also contribute to the global diversity that makes educational institutions like the University of Delaware vibrant and enriching environments for all.

The concept of trying extends beyond the word itself, echoing in the personalities of those I encountered. Much like Environmental Engineering offers diverse solutions, my connections in the USA have contributed to personal growth and a sense of belonging. In essence, "try" is an entryway to transformation. Its three letters encapsulate the bravery

required to embark on unknown journeys. Just as Environmental Engineering tackles diverse challenges that require multifarious solutions, the individuals I met showcased distinct yet harmonious personalities, much like the varied solutions they propose. I had the opportunity to take one of the volunteer classes offered by the University of Delaware to volunteer and explore cultures, so I went to Puerto Rico to try to engage with culture and volunteer there.

The experience of trying new things in Puerto Rico marked the inception of the idea of venturing into the unknown. This voluntary journey prompted me to reevaluate certain concepts in my mind – that giving entails more than just monetary contributions, and that even small actions can make a significant difference. For instance, when I delved into working with cement, one of the most demanding tasks, I developed a deeper respect and admiration for the workers. This volunteer experience instilled in me a spirit of experimentation, wherein even if I encountered obstacles and didn't complete tasks perfectly, I still gained the honor of trying.

The simplicity of try has continued to have a profound influence on my life's trajectory. Through it, I have transitioned from uncertainty to clarity, finding my passion and purpose which is to make a positive impact on our planet via Environmental Engineering. Furthermore, I am inspired by the challenges and growth that I know studying Environmental Engineering will bring me. My value for challenges and growth continued through my voyage to the USA, which was a mix of challenges and thrills, leading to self-improvement and newfound independence. Bonds formed in this foreign land defied expectations, evoking a sense of kinship.

In conclusion, the word try means a lot to me, as it signifies the beginning of exploration and seeing the world from a different perspective. It involves seizing opportunities, embracing

new experiences, and personal development. “Try” is greater than just a three-letter word; it is about perceiving and experiencing the world from multiple perspectives.