



“Indian organizations are more conservative than MNCs in discussing menstrual health with employees”

-Aparna Sharma, Serial Author and Former Country Head-Human Resources at Lafarge India

In a candid conversation with @andme.in, Aparna Sharma, Former Country Head-HR at Lafarge India and now a successful book author, shares her professional and health journeys us. Keep reading for important life lessons:

🌟 Nurture childhood traits

Aparna, the youngest child in her family, was a playful and fast learning kid who could speak in over 5 languages. Her pet name was 'Chatterbox'. Parents would say "Don't you get tired of speaking?". Further having left home for boarding school at an early age of 5 years, she lived across 7 different states and grew up to be an independent woman. Staying connected with her true self, she carried on these traits, to become a successful motivational speaker and author now.

🌟 Pursue your passions, even when one door might close

Aparna wanted to be an IAS officer. She got admitted to JNU to prepare for the IAS exam. But, one had to be 21 years old to appear for the exam. Aparna was 20, so she had to wait an year. Further with Mandal commission, IAS exam had been cancelled for that year; uncertainty was high. And family pressure around marriage was mounting. Not willing to succumb, after rigorous research, she applied to TISS and became one of the 30, out of 10,000 applicants to be selected. Thereon, building a knack for her courses, she launched a successful career in HR.

🌟 You don't get everything in life, you have to make the most of what you have

In 2015, Aparna's parents fell ill. She brought them to Bombay with her to take care of them. Through their illness and long rehab, Aparna juggled work taking meetings outside the ICUs, while balancing the constant anxiety of the parents health. She was stressed and realized she was becoming weak. But one day, she sat down and started writing. "It was so therapeutic for me. I diverted my stress into writing". She didn't know she could ever write a book, but one thing led to another, and is now the author of 3 successful books.

🌟 Periods in corporate life: Advice and insights

For Aparna, periods have always marked their arrival with leg and back pain. She underwent a phase of excessive bleeding caused by Ovarian Fibroids and had to take steroids. She says "I was not at peace", but she didn't let that effect her work.

She says "At workplace we are in an environment where there are men also. While periods are a reality, a lot of women do not want to accept it. There is some phobia / stigma attached to it, that it is bad and something that you should hide". Her tips from working in both MNCs and Indian organizations, on what works:

*Invite Gynecologists to talk to employees about menstrual health. Send invite emails to all employees, not just women | Understand and build empathy for those who might be in pain but don't share due to the stigma | Drive conversations

Want to learn more about Aparna? Feel free to ask in the comments below

She is #Unstoppable