

## **TRANSITION FROM STRIPLING LIFE TO SELF-REALIZATION IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S *FIVE POINT SOMEONE***

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### **Abstract**

*The Fictional world of Chetan Bhagat discuss the way in which he visualizes the lives of youth, how they face problems that include human relationships, the real value of human relationship is explored in his fiction Five Point SomeOne, the fiction completely explains about the students, their motivations and aspirations in the comparative atmosphere of IIT. Apart from the educational atmosphere in the fiction the personal life of the characters are also portrayed beautifully. Chetan Bhagat's book Five Point Someone is so popular that it has given him a new identity. This Research paper explores the adaptations of the adolescent people who are the protagonists of this novel, they adapt to certain situations in their life only to attain their ultimate goal of success. Each important character is analyzed using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.*

**Keywords:** IIT, Adolescence, Stress, Practice, Rules.

*Five Point Someone* is the story of Alok Gupta, Ryan Oberoi and Hari Kumar, three freshers who make it to the hallowed Indian Institute of Technology at Delhi, from completely different backgrounds and vastly different takes on life. Alok has a family to look after; he is the only hope for his paralyzed father, school-teacher mother and a simpering sister. Ryan is a cool guy, with parents earning in dollars, but indifferent to the needs of their child, and as a result, the son has turned into a cynic, a brilliant cynic. Hari is the hero of the fiction who is in love with his professor's daughter, which adds the love angle to the plot.

The three friends in IIT are unable to cope with the grading system followed in that institution. Three hostel mates Alok, Hari and Ryan get off to a bad start in IIT – they screw up the first class quiz. And while they try to make amends, things only get worse. They are at the lowest echelons of IIT society. They have a five-point-something GPA out of ten, ranking near the end of their class. This GPA is a tattoo that will remain with them, and come in the way of anything else that matters their friendship, their future, their love life. While the world expects IITians to conquer the world, these guys struggle to survive.

The book is narrated in the first person by Hari, with some small passages by his friends Ryan and Alok, as well as a letter by Hari's girlfriend Neha Cherian. It deals with the lives of the three friends, whose elation on making it to one of the best engineering colleges in India is quickly deflated by the rigor and monotony of academic work.

The novelist advises the youths not to make race with others but with themselves if they want to succeed in life. This is what, if one has a race with oneself, one can never

be a loser even if one comes last in the race. So let them enjoy freedom and do what they want and wherefrom they want to start. Neha, the daughter of Professor Cherian is strictly instructed not to talk to the IITians but she talks, befriends but she feels suffocated in the reserved environment of the home.

In the viewpoint of the novelist, a libertarian is always straightforward in his approach to life. He listens to the voice of his soul which, he strongly believes in, is ever true. He may suffer a big loss but finally emerges out victorious. For instance all three friends meet ignominy at college campus. All the teachers as well as the students take them for nuts, idiots and losers only because they under perform in the exams and notch five points something. But like others they are not bloody muggers, they are freethinkers, true lovers of life, harbingers of innovative ideas, icons of liberty and precursors of the youth calling approach. They never lose confidence, work harder on the lube project and consequently their project is approved and they succeed to achieve big fame and name.

Friendship is the most important thing the youth of today believe in. They can do anything for the sake of friends. The characters grow with friends as well as fall with them. In *Five Point Someone* Hari, Ryan and Alok stay together, gossip together, have fun and live their life to the full. Bhagat's characters resemble him in some form or the other, not entirely. In *Five Point Someone*, Hari is the character who depicts Chetan Bhagat himself.

It is often said that the teenage years are the best years of ones life. Life for many adolescents is a painful tug of war filled with mixed messages and conflicting demands

from parents, teachers, friends, family and oneself. Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and mental human development that occurs between childhood and adulthood. This transition involves biological, social, and psychological changes. The period of Adolescence is filled with intellectual and emotional changes in addition to other major biological and physical changes. It is a time of discovery of self and one's relationship to the world around him or her.

Adolescents are facing the problems of addiction to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco smoking and chewing. Some reasons for addiction are frustration, depression, and feeling of independence, false belief of enhanced physical, mental or intellectual performance by drug taking.

When coming to the character Alok he is in the stressful situation that he has to look after his family because his father is paralysed and he has an elder sister to get married and the mother always talks about the family situation and instructs him to study well to get a good job so that the family would come out of the poverty level. At this situation he gets in to trouble and he could not give up his friends also, so he jumps from the top of IIT building, all these things happen because of the stress in the adolescent mind.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs the first and foremost need which Maslow dealt with is Physiological needs these are the basic needs of air, water, food, clothing and shelter. In other words, physiological needs are the needs for basic amenities of life. Based on the first need of Maslow's hierarchy the characters in the fiction *Five Point Someone* do not face any problem, except the character Alok.

Alok is the one who face problem with the basic needs, since his father is not working his family face problem with basic needs, they do not have sufficient food to live and due to that the mother in the family always cries regarding their poverty condition and also due to the ill health of the father, this creates stress in the mind of Alok, because of the stress he could not able to enjoy the college life like other youngsters. Everyone would understand the fact that adolescence is the age to enjoy and to enjoy the liberty, but because of the family condition Alok is not able to enjoy and he feel isolated when his friends enjoy life, he wish to work hard for the welfare of his family. He likes to enjoy but his

family condition is being the barrier to his happiness, always he thinks about the family condition and creates a barrier to enjoy with his friends.

The next need which Maslow talks about is Safety needs which include physical, environmental, emotional safety and protection. For instance, job security, financial security, protection from animals, family security, health security, etc. In this fiction *Five Point Someone* Neha, the daughter of Prof. Cherian likes to come out and to enjoy her life but, because of her father she could not come out, as he does not like her coming out. She feels very isolated because there is no one for her to share her emotions.

Her brother commits suicide because he does not get admission in the IIT institution, he gets his father's hatred and lies under the running train and ends his own life. Neha protects this truth from his father, by not showing the letter written by her brother, at home she is being alone and the incident of his brother's sudden death bothers her a lot. She could not concentrate in other things, so she comes out and she meets Hari the hero of the fiction, she spends time with him, they both fall in love and she finds an emotional security through him.

The next step in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is social needs it includes needs for belonging, love, and affection. In this fiction *Five Point Someone* Ryan is the active character who always spend time with his friends, want to have fun all the time, he has everything in life. He will get anything he want and he enjoys complete financial status because his parents are abroad, earning in dollars and send him huge amount of money and he also gets a new bike in which he takes his friends around the IIT building and they watch movies at night by riding in the bike.

He helps his friend Hari to impress his girl friend Neha with an innovative gift, even though he enjoys everything he lacks family safety, since both his parents are not with him he feels lonely and all the time he likes to enjoy with his friends. He could not cope up with Alok because he is in the stressful situation because of the poverty condition in the family, always Alok want to read books and to prepare for the assignments which is disliked by Ryan and often they fight, always Ryan feel a kind of insecurity.

The next step in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is Esteem needs Esteem needs are of two types, internal esteem needs (self- respect, confidence, competence, achievement and freedom) and external esteem needs (recognition, power, status, attention and admiration). According to this fiction the parent characters in *Five Point Someone* could be easily fit in this hierarchy, Neha's father wish that his son should study in IIT and he does not care about the ambition of his son. He only gives importance to his power and recognition and as the end result his son could not enter in to the institution and the father hurts him

to the core and he commits suicide, due to the fathers strictness and power there happens a loss of life. He with his profession threatens Alok to complain against his friends, utilizing his family situation, at the same time he could not give up his friends due to that Alok jumps from the top of the building but saved by his friends.

Alok's mother because of the family situation always cries and explains about the father who got paralysed and unmarried sister, she insists Alok to study well and to settle in the good company so that their status would grow, so that they could come out of the below poverty line, due to the stress Alok always feels isolated, he always feels like having a burden at his back.

The last need according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is Self-actualization need which includes the urge to become what we are capable of becoming, what we have the potential to become. It includes the need for growth and self-contentment. It also includes desire for gaining more knowledge, social- service, creativity and being aesthetic. The self- actualization needs are never fully satiable. As an individual grows psychologically, opportunities keep cropping up to continue growing. The main three characters in the fiction namely Hari, Alok, Ryan and also Neha, they all strive to grow higher in life, not only the characters in the fiction *Five Point Someone*, normally everybody, particularly adolescent people have all the powers in them to compete in this rapid growing world, they all want to prove their talent and to get a dignity in the society.

The youth of India has all the powers in them, it is the duty of the parents to bring them out, the parents should not restrict the youth, the youth people should not be treated as slaves they should be given liberty so that they could innovate things and they could be able to bring out their beautiful colours. The teachers should also update themselves with knowledge to make the students brighter in all aspects, they should be able to handle any kind of questions from the students, the creativity among students should be encouraged, rather than theoretical classes, practical modes must be encouraged.

According to Maslow, individuals are motivated by unsatisfied needs. As each of these needs is significantly satisfied, it drives and forces the next need to emerge. Maslow grouped the five needs into two categories Higher-order needs and Lower-order needs. The physiological and the safety needs constituted the lower-order needs. These lower-order needs are mainly satisfied externally. The social, esteem, and self-actualization needs constituted the

higher-order needs. These higher-order needs are generally satisfied internally, i.e., within an individual.

In the shifting didactic drift, adaptability in educational courses, accessibility of sufficient qualified persons, the contest for job gaining and job maintenance is becoming tough. To get a frame over the competitors, students are left with no choice but to add values to their skills.

In *Five Point Someone*, the blend of college romance, an academic struggle and the confusion of what to do next is blended in a very entertaining manner, spiced up of course with a task master teacher and a smart mentor. The title of course is based on grading systems in IITs, where five pointers are among the laggards in the class. This book is a racy one and it has a unique novelty wherein the characters speak for themselves, their own point of view. The character Ryan possesses more of soft skill but never tries to satisfy his professors in IIT.

During one of the interview sessions faced by Alok, he is provided the job for his attitude rather than the GPA. This brings a great message for society mainly to young generation and to their parents and guardians. All parents want their teen to get good marks in school and then get admission in engineering, medicine and secure their future. The novel brought a message that one should do the work they are passionate about. The novel also gives the message that student should not focus on just remembering books chapter but focus on getting practical knowledge. The novel became the best seller as it went to be an eye opener for many people.

The novel also serves as guidance for teachers, professor and to the education system in India that are running a factory for producing engineers. It has tried to touch upon several aspects of education role learning, blind rate race, unrealistic material values, creative teaching method, creative and practical intelligence, deceptive grading system, over obsession with marks and qualifications, importance of fearless attitude etc. It also implies that people should not be judged by degrees alone, which can be deceptive. Parents should encourage their children and teachers should encourage the student's skills.

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