

Living upto My Name

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I remember Nana vividly. He was a kind, generous, gentle soul with a sparkle in his eyes - wit, wisdom, and joy rolling off his tongue and from his heart like rubies. He was a well renowned surgeon in India, and he had the opportunity to practice abroad in London, but he chose instead to serve an impoverished community in his home city of Patna. I remember following him around like an obedient puppy, imitating his every move, checking patients with him, scrubbing in for surgeries, watching in awe as he administered injections or cut with precision - always with a smile.

It wasn't until after we had left India when I was a young girl, and after I returned to India for the first time for Indicorps as a young woman, that I realized the significance of my name. Nana named all of us - both my brothers and me. He named my brothers fame and fortune, and he named me Prerna, inspiration.

In that way, the Indicorps fellowship was a catalyst. It catalyzed the realization that my life had a pre-ordained purpose, that Nana had been prescient in his naming of me, that I was intended to live a life of service, and to inspire others to do the same, to recognize the infinite potential in themselves, and each other. It made me realize why I was so enamored with the person Nana was, why I wanted to emulate him in so many ways. It wasn't the doctoring that I was drawn to, though originally, that's what I thought - by being a doctor, I could be like Nana - it was his deep commitment to service, to undoing injustice, to righting wrongs, to fighting fearlessly, despite the struggle. That's what Nana taught me, and that's who I aspired to be, but it wasn't until I actually started serving with my heart and soul through Indicorps that I realized who I was, and what I was intended to do.