



Kerala Journal of Orthopaedics

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Editor's Note

Last year, when the journal was finally brought out one fine evening, I trudged with great trepidation across the road from my house to the hospital where I did my first job after finishing my orthopaedic postgraduate training. Tucked away under my left axilla was a copy of the 29th edition of our journal which only I had seen till then. The idea was to handover this first copy to the one person I believed I should hand over the first copy to. But at the same time, there was the fear that he would raise a whole load of questions that would probably leave me wondering why I even ventured to try. As it passed, he took the copy, went through it silently for a few minutes, looked up and smiled and stretched his hand out to me, saying 'well done'. I still cannot believe he actually said that, or maybe meant that. He probably did not want to disappoint me. I was tempted to bend forward and touch his feet, trying to make myself believe that if I did not do it this time, I would probably never get a chance again. But there was this part of me which said, no... don't do that and tempt fate. Bad things will pass and good health and life will prevail. As it stands, I never got that chance to touch the feet of KCG which I had wanted to do several times while I was with him, but knowing him full well, I know that his blessings will be there for always with everyone, irrespective of whether they touched his feet or not, irrespective of whether they bowed to him or not, irrespective of whether they agreed with him or not...

Procrastination is the one English word most people who have worked with him would have learnt from him, and more importantly how not to allow that trait to creep into one's clinical decision making and actions. He always reminded that complication is not a failure as such; rather the failure to pick it up in time is, and even more so a surgeon's failure is to have noticed it and not acted upon rectifying it...

Much more than the occasional few times patients have landed into his care with complicated problems, and making allegations against the primary surgeons. Even senior most surgeons would quite commonly send their complications to him. If there was a lesson to learn from it, that would be pointed out to the juniors, but otherwise, any issue would be settled without slandering or oneupmanship. In these times when people are engaging in professional jousting, he exercised extreme control against that base human tendency of gaining advantage for oneself over another's failure...

There may not be many classifications which KCG taught us, neither will there be many lists of named surgical techniques, I am sure. But there will probably not be a classification system, the practical usefulness of which in decision-making he did not point out; or a surgical technique, the logic behind which he did not question. It is said that good teachers give their students all the right answers. KCG never gave the answers, but always encouraged anyone and everyone to ask why, to ask how, to ask what if...

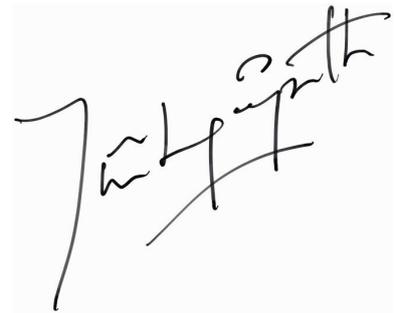
I remember once sieving through old volumes of our journal from the nineties of the previous century, and noticing that he was the author of so many articles. I remember mentioning this to him and he lamented that that was because nobody in this state of ours is really keen on writing and sharing their knowledge. Unfortunately, that trend seems to be continuing to this day, except for the perfunctory attempts to write out an occasional article on the sly for the mandatory purpose of timely promotions. This was a regret he always had, that he could not inspire his juniors to write for the sheer purpose and thrill and satisfaction of sharing knowledge, and spreading inquisitiveness. He even challenged a few

of us to attempt to do that, to bring out to the fore the rich clinical collective experience that actual exists in the orthopaedic fraternity of our state...

I have served two years as the editor of this longstanding journal and during the course, I have approached several people with requests to write for us. Many responded positively in the negative, many didn't respond, and many gave their excuses. But one question rings true in my mind from an orthopaedic researcher of some international standing. Why is it that your journal after so many years is still not indexed? Unless the organisation asks itself this question, and fast, this question will not be answered. And if it does ask itself this question, there will be no difficulty in bringing to our home ground an indexed journal of great quality...

I have had a very memorable experience as editor for two years, and I have to say that I learned a lot of things which I wouldn't have otherwise. I wish my successor all the very best. And I remind readers to reflect back on the life and principles of the great teacher who left our midsts forever this year, and be inspired by it for a lifetime...

Wishing everyone a happy 2018, and a great annual conference at Kannur.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'Girish Gopinath'.

Girish Gopinath