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HUMANS OF ANALYTICS

# Humans of Analytics

# Tuhin Chattopadhyay: The Old Monk – Analytically Spiritual & Mathematically Philosophical

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Being a rational person, I always thought that I should define my own destination and the path to reach the same without subscribing to any given path, as one size does not fit all. In fact, my metaphysical quest

after the ultimate truth triggered my research bent of mind. I gave into my reading habit as a way to quench my intellectual curiosity. I started reading books on eastern and western philosophies, Vedas, Upanishads, comparative religion with specialization in Buddhism, literature, and psychology. While reading and thereby critically appreciating any text, I used to actively question and decode the text by applying multiple tools and techniques like deconstruction, historicism, Marxism, realism, structuralism, psychoanalysis etc. to figure out the veiled currents, cross-currents and politics which ultimately helps me in extracting the underlying truth out of it. No wonder, my profession as a data scientist is a natural extension of my philosophical self that follows the same pattern of generating insight, now, from the messy reality of data.

On a hindsight when I look back at my journey, it is interesting to find how my spiritual journey contributed to my analytical way of thinking and vice versa. The concept of causality which is the essence of many analytics algorithms like regression has its roots in both Indian and Western philosophy. In my spiritual journey, I am in the search of true happiness and I figured out the importance of each of the factors like satisfaction from relationships, altruism, compassion that contributed

to my positive psychology. While developing a marketing mix model (MMM), only the context changes but the concept remains the same. In an MMM as well, I figure out the impact of each of the marketing stimulus like print advertisement, television advertisement and internet advertisement on sales volume/value. Thus, the underlying philosophy of causality that manifests in developing my model for both nirvana (liberation) and sales remain the same, only the context changes. In fact, the entire lifecycle of analytics project resembles my view of developing a spiritual model for the life.

The first step that I follow in accomplishing an analytics project is to understand the business problem and translate the same to an analytics problem with specific identification of the variables that might leave an impact on the business problem. In the path of spirituality, too, I figure out the causes of my suffering as precisely as possible to take the right measures.

Needless to mention that in a spiritual journey, all the causal variables are internal and therefore controllable. The second stage in an analytics project is data collection and preparation. The same is true in my spiritual journey as well. For data collection, I identify the instances in life where a particular phenomenon, which could be instances of

anger or craving, is displayed. I find a lot of contamination in data collection for both analytics projects and spiritual exploration.

As far as my methodology to explore analytics and spiritual path is concerned, I find a lot of commonality between the two as they complement each other. I primarily practice meditation through two ways viz. placement meditation and analytical meditation. While I concentrate my mind on a particular object during placement meditation, I contemplate and analyse how the different factors like anger, attachment, cravings, and aversions interplayed in my daily life in preventing me to be liberated during my analytical meditation. Thus, the seeds of my analytical bent of mind were sown in the meditation only. In fact, many concepts of research design were clear to me during my analytical meditation. For instance, apparently the purchasing of a new mobile, car, necklace or apartment provide a lot of pleasure.

During my analytical meditation, I realized the existence of several confounding, lurking, moderator and mediator variables like the inflation of the ego and therefore the pleasure generated through the ego massage of the self is misperceived as joy. Similarly, the essence of optimization was clear during my analytical meditation while

figuring out the path I should adopt. The very essence of a “Middle Way” comes from optimization of the liberation function where the meditative practices need to be maximized with the constraints like health conditions, available time from professional and personal life. Thus, my professional and personal life create the right synergy that manifests in an analytically spiritual and mathematically philosophical self through inner growth and development.

Meet Tuhin Chattopadhyay: The Old Monk – Analytically Spiritual & Mathematically Philosophical

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