

Stumped!

A father asks his 12-year-old son to go into the backyard and remove a tree stump. The boy, eager to show his dad his ability to execute this manly task, runs out and begins to push the stump with all his might. After about 20 minutes of huffing and puffing, the stump stood there without a change in position.

Soon, the boy realizes that his dad was watching him this whole time. Embarrassed, he tells him, "I'm sorry, dad. I can't do it." His dad just smiles and says, "Son, give it everything you have got!"

The boy, now, more determined than ever, kicks, pulls, and pushes the stump until his arms go limp. Exhausted, the boy tells his father between heavy breaths, "I can't do it."

His father looks at him and repeats, "Give it everything you have got!"

The boy picks himself up and decides to give it one last try. But after 30 more minutes of gruelling attempts, the stump is nowhere close to detaching itself from the ground. Now the boy is entirely spent. He sits on the stump and looks up at his dad. "I'm sorry, dad. I gave it everything I have got. I really did. It just wasn't enough."

His father smiles and replies, "You didn't give it everything you have got, son. Because you never asked me for help."

All of us, during our growing years are taught the value of helping those in need. This ethos comes handy when we enter the professional realm. In fact, our attitude to lend a helping hand is a mere hygiene if we aspire to succeed. However, 'offering' help solves only one side of the equation, since often the problem resides on the other side—when we do not actively 'seek' help from others.

The above challenge has assumed greater relevance in the new world disrupted by COVID-19. With remote work culture on the rise, many professionals find it awkward to reach out 'digitally' to seek help (sometimes from colleagues they have never even met).

Unless, of course, we work for a well-knit entity whose 'give and take' culture is

institutionalized in its DNA and transcends the medium of communication—be it in-person or virtually!