

PATIENT ADVOCACY in India

SUBMITTED BY ABT ASSOCIATES

FOR ARUNAV MISRA, IT WAS A RAPID DESCENT. The 62-year-old Delhi-based environmental consultant had raced with a volunteer squad to the Gujarat earthquake site in January 2001 to help with rescue, rehabilitation, and relief. He lifted 100 dead bodies from the debris. Some days he couldn't eat or sleep. After 15 days of providing logistical support, a stressed-out Arunav returned home with pain in his heart and stomach. The diagnosis: diabetes. That led to a mental-breakdown and months of depression, frustration, and agony as his diet changed and his everyday life was disrupted. He couldn't tend to his business. "I lost my health, wealth, weight, business and social connections, and enthusiasm," he recalls.

He reached his nadir on December 31, 2002. He was at home with his family when his 14-year-old daughter Pragya asked him what his New Year's resolution was. In the depths of despair, he replied that he had no hope, no expectations for the coming year.

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NOT A VICTIM,"
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"I CAN DO
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- ARUNAV MISRA

Then Pragya gave him an earful. Showing wisdom beyond her years, she told him that he had done a lot for his family, his community, and his industry. It was time for him to do something for himself. He had to come out of his state, and the family would help. Moved by his daughter pleading, he knew that his family would provide for him the safety net he had provided for them for so long. He quit chain-smoking. He added yoga, vegetables, and medicines to his daily routine. He slowly regained his confidence. Within three months, he had put weight back on and rejoined his businesses. In fact, his business ventures were better than ever as new business avenues opened up. "I am not a victim," he declares. "I can do anything."

