She is one of those friends that you have to monitor and with her you need to call your other friend, *responsibility*. While Freedom likes to test limits, responsibility reminds us of the consequences. Both are complementary because with only freedom, it can be pure madness and with only responsibility, it can be sheer depression.

In other words, the solution to the glass bottle in my particular case required some old-fashioned time and patience. I needed to make my grandparents realize that I was also responsible and the best and only way I could do it was by *showing* them I was a responsible, mature young lady and not a nagging, rebellious child. Although I left Lucy's with Bela Nanu tagging along at my side reminding me of my shackles, I also left feeling smooth, serene, and smart.

For a while, I forgot fighting for freedom and opted to start enjoying my time instead. I chilled with my grandparents: watching TV, shopping, eating out and in, visiting people, seeing places, and just moseying around. Eventually, I saw Bela Nanu as my sidekick instead of my chaperone. I am not ashamed but a little surprised to admit that I was, and still am, loving my time with my g-rents. However, one blessed humid afternoon, I went out by myself, *all alone*, (well the driver took me, but it was just me solo without B.N.). I needed (but really wanted) to buy a purse, nothing special and the g-rents let me go with only two conditions: to call them at times and to turn the switch on my brain and common sense on *high*. Of course, it's not the same kind of freedom I get at college in America where I can run out for pizza or ice cream at one a.m. with friends after a late night study session, or spend a whole night out in the park in the rain philosophizing, or lamenting, about my life. Still, I am very grateful and content with what I am given. So like every other *Bengali* I know, I'll blame this difference on the government.

Once the right point in time came along, I just happened to look up and miraculously find that the glass bottle has a cap that can be opened. No breakage necessary, simply learn how to unscrew it. I realize that some people have caps that are more tightly screwed, while others barely have a cap on their bottle, but in all cases, you will have to figure out the best way your cap unscrews, take an initiative, and wait for the right time. Just don't forget about responsibility, otherwise that cap might be stuck on tighter than before.

But this experience with my g-rents has made me realize how blessed I am to have people in my life who ask me where I am going, what I am going to do, and when I am going to get back. It's nice and comforting to know that your life means something to someone else.

Before I end this tale, I would like to thank Lucy's for being there. Just like Buddha found enlightenment under the fig tree, I found my enlightenment under the tube lights of Lucy's Beauty Parlour (with all this free publicity, Lucy's should hire me as their spokesperson or better yet, give me some free services. Just a suggestion…)

(The writer is a student of Economics and Religious Studies, University of Virginia)

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