

# **REACHING OUT**

**To The Youth Of The World  
A Success & Happiness Guide**



**Stephen Tan**

**A Global Project - 40 Languages Targeted**

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## Foreword

In the last 80 years, wars have cost us billions of dollars in destruction, and millions of precious lives. More recently, hatred and brutality have devastated much of Asia, Middle East, Europe and Africa. Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Zaire are glaring examples. The 1994 Report from the UN Development Programme, reveals that the richest 20% of the world feast on 85% of the earth's total output. In Asia alone, 700 millions live in poverty, with little ability to read or write. Soldiers outnumber doctors 20 to 1 in developing countries, yet a fighter jet could pay for the primary education of 1 million children!

In developed nations, we have strayed in other directions. Crime in America for example, costs US\$425 billion and many lives a year. The latest news is that the U.S. prison population have soared to 1 million; one in 250 citizens! In modern communities, where alarming percentages of marriages end in divorces, and part-time and solo parents are increasing, a 3-year wedlock seems eternity.

Internationally, more conflicts are now inside national borders, where tragically, 90% of the casualties are civilians. We spend a whopping US\$800 billion a year on weapons instead of welfare, yet an estimated US\$34 billion is sufficient to put the world's children on a good footing. The last 10 years saw far more children killed in wars than soldiers, with 2 million dead, 5 million disabled and 12 million homeless! What kind of adults will these millions of kids grow up to be, shaken and deranged by such mass violence and deprived of home, family, love, normal bodies and souls? Will they grow up to create or face greater problems and catastrophes in future? The global scene has a web of injustice, illiteracy, crime, diseases, famines and bloodshed.

One cannot help sinking into serious soul-searching, and ponder over the reasons and solutions for all these cruelties and miseries. Soon, an answer invariably emerges. It lies now in our offspring, the heirs to the world. They are our hope and future. A flurry of old phrases and new words comes to mind: A tree grows the way it is bent, nipping problems in the bud, love, guidance, conditioning, mental-

seeding...These words also trigger our recall of 2 bizarre incidents reported in recent times, which can chill our spines and touch our hearts about parents' sway on future generations. One involved an infant kept with the dogs, who later barked like a puppy; elsewhere, another child had been brought up by chimpanzees, and showed behaviour approaching that of the apes.

Parental care, religion, moral guidance and good education are the foundation for knowledge, skills, altruism, virtues and even justice. Parents tend to leave things to the schools, but being most influential, and answerable for their own flesh and blood, they should assume 90% of these duties. Beyond the family, and given the interwoven nature of society and the economic multiplier, if we would only put other people's welfare closer to our self-interests, our blessings could return tenfold!

Childhood and youth are a treasure, the most precious period of life. It is a time of great expectation, discovery, emotion, learning, formation of personality and character, and consolidation of personal substance. The new generation can in time be the powerful pillars of society, and possibly the salvation of humanity. If all of them could release their vast potentials, harness all available resources, and make combined efforts to improve and beautify the world, they could bring miracles. Meanwhile, not enough is being done to help the young. It is high time we realise that, to create a Utopia, young people need a creed to believe in, a moral code, strong values, a noble purpose, causes to champion, knowledge, health, wisdom, and profound innate strength.

All our youngsters must now advance resolutely towards a happy, meaningful and rewarding life; the rest of the world and their destiny depend on them. Governments, leaders and parents, on the other hand, have a grave moral duty, to provide the all-important education, nutrition, love, and a promising future. Despite current shortcomings, it is still a wonderful world, a fascinating universe. Let us strive to find and develop beauty and goodness everywhere. Let us crown our lives with a majestic purpose.

The Author.

## Preface

This book is written for the growth and well-being of children and youths, and indirectly, for the current and future welfare of those around them. We pray that they will learn to live happy and fruitful lives, and become the saviours of society.

The chapters follow a developmental process from age 10 to 35. This age group is almost 40% of global population, or 2.5 billion young and vibrant lives. Despite their free time, energy and receptivity, they remain a neglected and under-utilised group world-wide, yet it is in their tender age that morals, values, intelligence and talents are shaped and crystallised.

Hopefully, this will be a candle to the underprivileged in some dark corners of the earth, and a cradle for many, to nurture success. In the years ahead, may this be a guiding light, a constant companion, a source of comfort, encouragement and motivation. If this book reaches a great number of youngsters around the globe - which is our burning wish - its impact will be substantial, and its results, promising and gratifying to us all!

The Author.

"In you there is hope, for you belong to the future, just as the future belongs to you." - Pope John Paul II, Letter to the youths of the world, International Youth Year, 1985.

"What's done to children, they will do to society." - Dr K. Menninger.

"All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth." - Aristotle.

## Chapter 1 Why Are We on Earth?

The thought of sharing all my good ideas and knowledge with all of you everywhere thrills me to pieces! This is the 1st of the 100 chapters, so it is appropriate that I start at the beginning of everything; hence, the big question is: Why are we here?

We are here because God created the universe, and He made humans special among all his creations. We are His children, and you can appreciate how much He loves us. He could have built a perfect paradise on earth, with all living happily ever after; if that was the end of the story, wouldn't it be boring? That is why God lets the world carry on as it is, giving us freedom and choice. When we eventually discover Him, adore Him, and choose to join Him in heaven, He feels enormous gratification. It is a satisfaction beyond description, much grander than that of owning a faultless world from the start, because His children have come willingly to love him, without being forced to.

Should you or any of your friends doubt the existence of God, just ponder, the vastness and order of the universe. Its expanse is beyond human understanding or imagination. Our Sun, according to scientists, is only one of the countless stars around, many of which are much bigger. The others are so far away that they appear only as cold and dim twinkles in the night. These 'suns' are so distant that despite the speed light travels, their light takes hundreds of years to reach us! A light-year is the distance travelled by flashing light in a year, or about 9,518,616 million km. Our Milky-Way galaxy alone, is 100,000 light-years across, or 951,861,600,000 million km wide, and yet, that galaxy is only a speck of dust in the whole universe! The universe is that infinite, that endless.

The order in the universe is equally astounding. The planets rotate and revolve around the Sun. The earth gives working days and resting nights, and tilts to provide the seasons. The magnetic poles activate compasses to guide ships and planes. The human brain thinks, plans, calculates, and remembers! The human heart beats about 2,600 million times without resting, and each person contains 100 trillion cells, miraculous right down to the invisible DNA! The tongue tells the chilli from the tomato, while the nose differentiates champagne from coffee. Acorns always grow into trees, not roses, and Poodles never give birth to



Pekingeses. God gives us rain from the clouds, timber from the forest, food and medicine from the plants, rice and cotton from the fields, sugar from the canes and salt from the seas. Boys and girls attract each other, fall in love, then get married to produce offspring.

All members of this huge ecological system co-depend on one another. Are all these one big accident, without a God? Let me put it in simpler examples: If I served you a delicious meal would you say no one had cooked it? If you walked along the beach, found a watch and held it to your ear, and it was still ticking away beautifully, would you say nobody had made that watch? Do not doubt the presence of God. If you do, you are unfortunate, and you may find your life in this world and in the next, a little messy and unhappy, because there, something is definitely amiss.

At the onset here, I want you to see clearly and certainly, that you are here for a special reason: To love yourself, to love others, and to love God. You are here to bring success and happiness to yourself and your fellowmen. Someone once said, 'The great purpose of life is to make something that will outlast us.' It would be very sad, if you lived like a cow or a sheep and just passed away, without beautifying and enriching yourself, society and humanity. So let love and virtues be the focal point and the integral part of your values and your daily life. Let your love for your parents, brothers and sisters be **deep and unconditional**; then you will greatly enjoy and treasure their company, you will help them more and share the joy of building a wonderful home. If you really love God, you will do good, and do no wrong.

You are a lucky person in your own way and by normal standards, but today you are even luckier, because I am starting this book of 350 pages, and imparting everything to you to ensure your success and happiness. This is easy, with a bright and responsive youngster like you; all you need is to read every line attentively, then digest, understand and memorise them. Please put the good ideas into practice immediately. In the next 99 lessons, I will give you all the good concepts and encouragement to make you happy. Basically, life depends on our self-image, attitude, thoughts, actions, and our acceptance and handling of situations and people. How we overcome frustrations and problems is important. Life is not always a bed of roses, and people who succeed do not have fewer problems than those who fail. The only people without problems are those in the graveyards.

Whenever there is setback, it is okay. It is not the problem that matters, it is how we perceive situations and tackle them, that makes the whole difference!

I beg you to read all the chapters carefully. I will do my best to make them meaningful and interesting for you. I cannot expect you to embrace all my words immediately, but I have lived over 40 years, seen 26 countries, met thousands of people, read thousands of books and spent months in seclusion, reflecting on success and happiness. One day, you will say, 'Thank you Sir, you were right. Now we have come a long way, you have brought me much strength, goodness, joy and achievement.'

Life is precious, and you are! Make the most of life and yourself. Enjoy and progress every minute of your day. Today is the beginning of your great lifetime, let's have words from the great to enlighten you, and to launch you on your fabulous journey:

"He has half the deed done, who has made a beginning." - Horace.

"Give the best to the world and the best will come to you." - Anonymous.

"Man has his future within him, dynamically alive at this present moment." - Abraham Maslow.

"You are free to choose, but the choices you make today will determine what you will have, be, and do in the tomorrows of your life." - Z. Ziglar.

"Sow a thought and you reap an act; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny." - R. W. Emerson.

"Life means to have something definite to do - a mission to fulfill - and in the measure in which we avoid setting our life to something, we make it empty. Human life, by its very nature, has to be dedicated to something." - J. O. Gasset.

## Chapter 2 The Beauty and Wonder in Nature.

Tonight I stand peacefully beneath a cloudless sky, enchanted by thousands of stars. They are winking at me, with the light that they flashed hundreds of light-years ago! The splendour of the universe still stuns me. I am waiting for a falling star to make a special wish for you.

There it goes! I wish that in your lifetime, you will see and experience most of the natural and man-made wonders of the world, some of which I have relished myself. First, let us admire the natural wonders, which are really a mouthful. There are 900,000 types of insects on this planet, 250,000 species of plants, including 25,000 specimens of orchids and 20,000 varieties of roses. There are 30,000 kinds of fishes, thousands of breeds of mammals, and even 10,000 sorts of worms! That is enough to fill many sets of encyclopedias, and keep you busy for many lifetimes!

The first things that come to mind are the big ones, like the Grand Canyon in Arizona. It is a gigantic trench in the landscape, 450 km (280 miles) long, up to 29 km (18 miles) wide and 1.6 km (1 mile) deep! The gash was formed in the last 10 million years, mainly by the slow erosion of the Colorado river. The sight is awe-striking. See the magnificent Niagara Falls, straddling Canada and USA, called the honeymoon capital of the world. The voluminous descent looks like a curtain of white ropes; often bathed in dreamy, romantic colours from the nightly spotlights. If you have the chance, adore the Angel Falls in Venezuela, the highest waterfall on earth; then tour the world's largest river, the Amazon, in neighbouring Brazil. The upper reaches of the Amazon are home to some of the prettiest aquarium fishes, such as the Neon Tetra.

Let the world's tallest geyser thrill you at the Yellowstone Park in USA, called the 'Old Faithful' for its regularity. It hurls 45,000 litres (10,000 gallons) of hot water, 45 metres (150 ft) into the air! There are also sensational boiling mud and yellow sulphur pools nearby. Did you know there are smaller ones in Taupo and Rotorua in New Zealand and elsewhere too? These are all parts of the bewildering volcanic actions around the globe; but I hope you will never meet an erupting volcano! There are still 500 active ones. Under them, the intense 6,000 degrees Celsius temperature of the earth's core has formed brilliant and glamorous

gems and crystals. Examine the sparkle of a diamond at the jeweller, the rich green of the emerald, the mesmerising blue of the sapphire, and the alluring red of the ruby! The lustrous pearl is something else, it is formed after the wrapping of a foreign particle, by an oyster!

Waltz or drink to the charm of the Danube river, which inspired Strauss and Ivanovici in their masterpiece-compositions of *The Blue Danube* and *Danube Waves*. The river winds through Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Germany, and Austria - the setting of the great movie *The Sound of Music*. What a combination and heritage!

Go south of the equator, and venture onto the Ayers Rock in Central Australia and savour its changing colours, then move eastward to the Great Barrier Reef - 1,500 kilometres of underwater wonderland for swimmers and divers. The Reef is only 7 hours' drive from the Sunshine Coast my family visited recently! Study the dozens of Australian species of parrots, Macaws, Cockatoos, Budgies, Parakeets, and the rainbow Lorikeets too, which my family befriended on our last trip. Farther north, the mangrove swamp will show you the delicious mud-crabs, the naughty mud-skippers, the underground Lung Fish, and an occasional crocodile. If you are lucky enough, you may get acquainted with the strange Darwin Frog that hatches its eggs in the mouth. If you dig hard enough in the Australian desert, you may even find the Spade-Foot Toad It keeps moist by hibernating deep in the sand, until a heavy downpour induces it lay eggs.

We hope that one day you will chance upon the exquisite Midnight Sun in Northern Europe or Alaska, as the Arctic region tilts towards the summer sun, which does not set for a few nights! Stay a few more days and watch the astonishing Aurora - the Northern Lights - dramatic colours and dancing lights across the sky, caused by highly charged solar particles and atmospheric gases. Below the sky, view the icebergs and glaciers, but avoid the avalanche at all costs! Stay clear of the typhoons, tornadoes and hurricanes too, but watch the common yet spectacular lightning, and listen to its roaring thunder. You need not be afraid; it is estimated that every minute there are 6,000 lightnings flashing around our good earth. After the thunderstorms, look for the rainbow and let its prettiness linger in your mind. You can create your own rainbow too by splitting a spectrum of light. Put a torch light behind a glass prism, or cast a fine spray of water in a sunlit garden (which I used to do for my children), it is lovely!

Away from the biggies, the average things are even more miraculous and mesmerising. Recline lazily in the Dead Sea in Jordan, and read my book; the saltiest water in the world will keep you afloat forever. Walk on the black-sand beaches in Iceland, or watch the rising and falling tides of rivers anywhere around the globe, obediently magnetised by the moon.

Tumble into the deep jungles of New Guinea, and peep at the several species of Birds of Paradise. Their colours of red, orange, green and iridescent blue, coupled with angel-like long tail-streamers and discs, make them truly blissful and unforgettable. Then there is the peacock, with its jubilant tail display, spanning 1.5 metres. The superb Lyre Bird has a tail shaped like the ancient Greek guitar. Watch the brilliant blue Fairy-Wren of Australia, the gorgeous Fairy-Blue Bird of Asia, the elegant plumage colours of the Kingfishers, the pleasing Toucans, the charming Cocks-of-the-Rock, and numerous pretty Sunbirds. Do not miss the petite Hummingbird, which flaps its wings 80 times a second! You must listen to the beautiful songs of the New Zealand Bellbird, with a musical pitch so hypnotic and unique that I almost heard *'The Bluebells of Scotland'*. Listen to the melodic Asian Magpie Robin. Remember too, to converse with the mimicking Myna from Borneo.

Do not forget the clownish Puffin, carrying 10 fish at once in its beak. The short-tailed Shearwater birds take a yearly 30,000 km tour of Japan, Alaska, Canada, and Fiji, and return unflinchingly, to South Australia in the last few days of September. The sun-loving Arctic Terns make the longest bird migration, from the North Pole to the South Pole, and back! Oh, the wonders are endless.

You should have joined the group of scientists, who in 1977 descended 2,500 metres to the pitch-dark ocean floor near Galapagos Islands. They did it in a special submarine called 'Alvin'. The world they saw, unseen by the sun, was incredible and bustling with life that ranged from the bizarre to the beautiful. There were strange creatures, and fishes that had various lights to show the way! The Football Fish, for example, has a round body covered in bony plates, plus a cable carrying a light-bulb above its head. Nearer the surface, you have giant squids growing up to 20 metres, the length of your classroom. The South African electric eel has enough power to light up 10 household bulbs! The adorable dolphins find their way by making sounds and listening to their echoes. Salmon navigate back to their exact birthplaces, to lay eggs and die. In California, the

Grunion Fish dances out of the soupy sand, to lay thousands of eggs in a minute.

I hope too, that one day in Mexico, you will stumble onto the picnicking ground of a few million Monarch butterflies; the sight is dazzling. Illuminations, mind you, are not confined to ocean floors. On the Japanese island of Hachijo, fungus plants glow like lanterns in the night, bright enough to be seen 20 metres away. Elsewhere in various countries, the fireflies flash orange in flight and green on the ground. Glow-worms are common too. Someday, I hope you can get a camera with a zoom-lens, and capture various sensational sights, like the flying Lemurs, gliding from tree to tree. Do you know there are 1000 species of bats and flying-foxes, and that spiders have up to 8 eyes? The dragonfly has 40,000 small eyes compounded together! Not to forget the big eyes of the owls, and the ridiculous-looking wide-eyed Tarsier, a tiny brown tree dweller, whose big round eyes will make you laugh.

Before I finish off here, let us turn our camera to the eye-filling Noah's Ark, forever around us, with such a rapturous array of: Seashells, starfish, lobsters, Jellyfish, caterpillars, butterflies, bees, squirrels, rabbits, porcupines, camels, zebras, giraffes, rhinoceros, elephants, sharks and rays, frogs and toads, newts and salamanders, lizards and crocodiles, turtles and tortoises, dolphins and whales, seals and sea-lions, penguins and polar bears, flowerpeckers and woodpeckers, falcons and hawks, platypus and spiny ant-eaters that lay eggs, gibbons and orangutans, leopards and cheetahs, Pugs and Malteses, Dalmatians and Silky Terriers.

'And Papillon, and Samoyed, and Bichon Frise...' my children would chip in as usual, they love dogs; but I would say: 'The world is so beautiful, but how many people really see it?'

### Chapter 3 The Powers of Flowers and Colours.

There is a poem I learned in my childhood days, which I remember clearly till this day. No other poem has such an impression on me; and true enough, a poetry book I looked into yesterday confirmed that ‘*The Daffodils*’ is one of the best ever written. Here is a part of it:

*I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze ...*

*They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.* - Wordsworth.

Wordsworth was writing about an English lakeside scenery, which he and his sister had cherished. Oh, if we could constantly see and feel, as Wordsworth did, we would always be filled with enchantment, we would be nearer the path to a world of happiness.

Imagine a world without colours, only black and grey! Visualise an earth without flowers, only iron and concrete. Colours and flowers are therefore, God's special gifts to humankind. The prettiest and sweetest things are God-given and free, or rather, are things we cannot buy. The fresh air, the soothing breeze, the enlivening shower and sunshine, the cloud's silver lining, the rainbow, the gorgeous trees and flowers and their fragrance, the music of the birds, the romantic sunset, the diamonds in the sky, the moonlight on the bay, and above all, life itself.

How much have you been missing? There are more: The swaying field of brilliant yellow flowers, the innocent, green sprouting leaves in spring, the rich chlorophyll of summer, the blazing orange of autumn, the whiteness of the winter

wonderland. These things can bring awakening and magic to our well-being, to our soul!

The garden and the landscape abound in floras and colours. There must be a thousand different shades and tones of blue, red, yellow, pink and green. Look at the red tulips and poppies, the stately dahlias, the yellow and joyous marigolds, buttercups, daffodils and sunflowers; the amber, bronze, copper, maroon and mauve of chrysanthemums, the bright faces of pansies, the blue lobelias and bluebells, the pink geraniums, the purple heathers and lilacs. Admire the peach blossom, the delicious blush of apples and cherries, all the crops, vegetables and spices; the endless, paradise displays of cactuses, impatiens, daisies, lilies, carnations, petunias, and so on.

When I was young I used to read about orchids and grow them. Have you ever flipped through a large book on orchids? Please do that on your next visit to the library! They are the biggest family of flowering plants, of almost 25,000 types, including many man-made, crossbred ones. They are found as far north as Alaska, and as high up as the Alps. Their long-lasting blossom, hues, shimmering contrasts and infinite range of tones thrills me. The vivid violet of the popular Dendrobiums, the jubilant Vandas, with angel-painted textures and patterns, the blissful spray of the Phalaenopsis, and probably the fairest of all is the fairy-like Cattleya, gentle and beautiful beyond description.

Then there are the queens of flowers, the roses. These blossoms of romance, friendship and dreams come in 2,000 species, with 20,000 ecstatic, cultivated varieties. Even the colours of roses have such meanings and feelings in our lives. For example, red roses convey love and respect, deep pink: appreciation, light pink: admiration or sympathy, orange: enthusiasm, yellow: joy, pale blended tones: friendship. You can do many things with roses, you can grow and cut them for bouquets and self-arrangement, or you can join an exhibition. You can dry roses, and also make pot-pourri mixture with spices, for fragrance. Rose petals and hips are also edible and used as medicine! Roses and other flowers obviously appeal to our 5 senses! You see, touch, and smell them, you taste them, then you sigh at their fragrance and beauty - that is sound, the last of the senses!

It is little wonder that flowers and colours have such an impact on our minds and behaviour. They can uplift our state of happiness to a degree few of us can fully evaluate. Take the common gesture of giving flowers, it brings a noble



feeling to both the giver and receiver. If we can appreciate the power, blessing and magic in flowers, we are closer to the road to happiness. If people had more 'flowers' in their hearts, there would be fewer conflicts and less bloodshed in the world. Nature's bloom takes away the gloom and disharmony in our environment. They calm, delight, and exude peace and gentleness, all the time. That is why important people and occasions make unfailing use of flowers. Many European cities, especially the German and Swiss ones, have flower-beds at the windows, and baskets of flowers on the lamp-posts. Most countries have their national flowers too.

Some surgeons operating on the hearts of patients had a ritual of pinning a 'Rose of Life' on the operation machine. The roses were later given to the waking patients. Over the years, the reputed medicinal properties of substances from flowers have even been contested in the courts and proven true! Away from the hospitals and in our everyday lives, flowers in the house and gardens assume great importance. Why don't you do something extra today, get several vases of fresh flowers and display them around the house, and admire them, a Garden of Eden! Then you can skim from petal to petal like an enchanted butterfly. You will feel good, I can assure you.

Besides flowers and plant life, everything in the world has some form of coloration. Everything in our daily lives has colours and they affect us, often without our knowing it. We must have this awareness, of the power of colours. The colours of buildings, houses, signboards, shops, walls, furniture and anything you buy or give away, they all carry a strong message. In some situations, it can even determine success or failure, because certain colours just do not suit a certain place, person or business. The colours we wear can match or mismatch our complexion, personality and position; they affect everyone and can even bring luck, as some people believe. Occasionally, we hear someone say: 'This is my lucky colour.' or 'This is my good-luck gem.'

Colours are now well known for their swaying and healing powers. Modern hospitals are very mindful of this, so are psychiatrists, artists, schools, hotels, commercial airlines, fashion, pop and theatrical shows, and even shopping windows. See how the jewellers display their gold and diamonds in a back-drop of deep red or dark blue? Magicians, movie-stars, models, marketing experts, politicians, kings and queens, toy-makers and sign-writers, and Santa Claus, you

name it, they all worship colours.

Works of art have fetched large sums of money through the use of alluring colours. Red is powerful, exciting and motivating; orange, loud and flamboyant; yellow, cheerful and lively. Peach is affluence and comfort; pink is romance. Green is soothing to the eyes, a Mecca for golfers and jungle-trekkers. Blue is said to be restoring and neutralising, good for headaches and sleeplessness. Violet is strong and vibrant, but light violet, amethyst, and mauve are calming and settling. Goethe commented aptly, 'Every individual colour makes on men an impression of its own, and thereby reveals its nature to the eye as well as to the mind.'

Please cultivate a constant awareness of the powers of flowers and colours, and remember, all through your life, that they are all the Ss, they support, soothe, sedate, sway, seduce, spellbind, and they sell!

"All things bright and beautiful ... All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all." - C. F. Alexander.

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever. Its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness." - J. Keats.

"Beauty in things exists in the mind which contemplates them." - D. Hume.

"Colours can calm, pacify and relax; they can energise, activate and invigorate. Colours are comforting, consoling and pleasing. They can heal, uplift, restore and balance. Colours speak, to those who are ready to listen." - Robert Holden.

## Chapter 4 The Magic of Songs and Laughter.

Happy faces are outward reflections of inner beauty and a lovely soul. The smile and laughter of acquaintances remain delightfully in our memory, even those of passing strangers linger on pleasantly, and we tend to recall them. Notice how often leaders and successful people smile or chuckle. For those sullen and graven faces, we would never give them a second thought or look. They attract no one, no luck or fortune. Life is really like a mirror, we get the best results and feed-backs when we smile and laugh often. Laughter is a right and almost a duty, it brings happiness to ourselves and others, providing the zest for living, and we will never lack friends. Why should we deny ourselves infectious jokes, healthy fun and joy?

Furthermore, there is much wealth, health, and happiness in songs and laughter! You could make a lot of money for making people laugh. Some of the best-paid people in show business are comedians and hosts of TV shows. Look at Mr Bean, Cosby, the 2 Ronnies, Eddie Murphy, Richard Pryer, Whoopi Goldberg, Dudley Moore and Johnny Carson, they have made bundles between themselves. If they had been solemn aircraft engineers or chess-players, I doubt they would have been that successful. The songwriters and singers may be even better off. Elvis Presley, the Beatles, Elton John and Michael Jackson have also grossed several billion U.S. dollars.

Besides wealth, it is beyond a shadow of doubt that laughter is excellent for health too. Reader's Digest, probably the largest circulating magazine in the world, always has a page entitled: 'Laughter the best medicine.' Even from a technical or medical point of view, laughter is all goodness. It increases the intake of fresh oxygen, the flow of blood to the brain, and stimulates the neurotransmitters. Above all, it tells your subconscious that you are relieved, carefree and happy. Experts maintain that your emotions are shown on your face, and in return your face affects your feelings. It is reciprocal. After exhaustive research, psychologists found that the extroverts, who spend much time mixing, talking, and laughing with people are the happier lot. They observed that if we laugh often, we never need suffer any stress, depression or nervous breakdown. The mentally-ills seldom laugh; if more people could indulge in songs and laughter, I think many of our mental hospitals would be half empty!

That reminds me of a man called Norman Cousins. Years ago, he was diagnosed by his doctors as terminally ill and was given 6 months to live. Later, he recalled in his book *Anatomy of An Illness* how he amassed and enjoyed all the jokes, funny stories and movies, and soon found that minutes of laughter could relieve his physical pain for hours! Guess what happened eventually? He recovered from his illness, and is now alive and well! The late Sir Thomas Lipton, had hundreds of retail shops in England, and many of his outlets had 2 mirrors. The entrance mirror reflected skinny hungry shoppers; the departure mirrors were also bent, to show fat, contented customers, roaring with laughter. Naturally, his company attracted great business.

If you do not feel like laughing, just laugh anyway, it will catch on. Otherwise, go into the bathroom and look in the mirror and pull your mouth toward your ears, you will laugh for sure! Some sickness may be contagious, but not as contagious as the cure: Laughter.

Let us thank almighty God for all the humour and music around us. Personally, life will never be the same for me and I believe that the world will never be the same, after the arrival of Beethoven, Mozart, Strauss, Bach, Debussy, Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn and Gershwin; and in the popular arena, after *The Sound of Music*, Elvis, Cliff Richard, Neil Sedaka, The Beach Boys, Bread, The Stylistics, Simon and Garfunkel, The Beatles, The Seekers, Bee Gees, Carpenters, John Denver, Lionel Richie, Diana Ross, Carole King, Abba, America, Olivia Newton-John, Elton John, Gloria Estefan, Richard Marx and Clayderman. They have enriched our lives tremendously.

Even the natural world is teeming with sweetness and harmony, we need them all. Listen to the melodies of birds and insects, and beautiful human voices, aided by the enchanting harp, flute, guitar, piano and the lovely, swaying undulation of pipe-organs and orchestras. From now on, pamper and fill your ears and mind as never before, and savour a more fulfilling life. Even an unborn baby is comforted by the sound of the mother's heart-beat, and even our body is composed of rhythm (as in heartbeats), tone, rest, and vibration! John Logan stipulated, 'Music is the medicine of the mind.' Music, like our subconscious mind, is a very mysterious thing. Its magical effects are imperceptible on the surface, but it sure runs deep. May your life be blessed with jest and jazz, with laughter and beautiful melodies.

"We need more laughter and songs, to advance us along. Less idling and more do, to help us through." - Author.

"The man that hath no music in himself, nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, stratagem, and spoils." - Shakespeare.

"There is very little success where there is little laughter. The workman who rejoices in his work and laughs away its discomforts is the man sure to rise." - Andrew Carnegie.

"Life was given us to enjoy,... there is youthful magic in laughter." - Ken Roberts.

"Rhythm, again was given us from the same heavenly source to help us in the same way; for most of us lack measure or grace." - Plato.

"Music, as they say, is the basis of agreement among things in nature... It brings together and unites." - Plato.

"Laugh and the world laughs with you..." - E. W. Wilcox.

"Thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing. Thanks for all the joy they're bringing. Who can live without it? I ask in all honesty, what would life be without a song or dance, what are we?" - from one of the songs by ABBA, the Swedish pop group.

## Chapter 5 Seeing and Finding Good Everywhere.

I am opening my eyes, and remembering that this is Sunday, I jump off the bed and say a short prayer, thanking God for another new day. As usual, I promise myself to enjoy and utilise fully every minute ahead of me. I dash out to the balcony. The black sky is turning blue; the moon and stars are growing dim and fading. In the East, there is a silvery glow, gradually turning gold. Every dawn is a miracle. Now the treetops are gleaming with some kind of copper and gold. Ssssh, it is the Magpie Robin; such a pleasing melody! Sounds like he is saying: Morning has broken, like the first morning... Now, what is that short flute-like whistle? It must be the Iora bird. I am extending my neck to find it. There it is, on that coconut tree, the lemon-green Iora! I am doing a bit of stretching exercise, taking in a lung-full of refreshing oxygen, superb. Now the trees are showing off their lush green. There is the dawn chorus, but the dew still blankets the grass.

I am turning on the soothing warm shower. Wow! 10 times better than the well-water I had when I was a child, and 100 times better than no shower at all - as in some parts of the world. I am lucky and grateful.

These Reebok shoes feel good, no wonder they are so popular, and matched to these white shorts, I get a glimpse of a made-believe tennis champion as I passed the glass door. I am walking on, with the binoculars slinging down my chest, enjoying every breath of fresh morning air, and stopping to admire the dewdrops on the tips of the sprouting, needle-like, dwarf bamboo leaves. I used to pluck them for my mother's herbal tea when I was a child. Two Magpie Robins are still dueting beautifully in the distance. The hedge of Morning-Glory flowers, aren't they pretty! A couple of children-spiders are already weaving their web, what geometry and intriguing sight!

Soon I arrive at the Reservoir Park, surrounding a small freshwater lake. The different palm trees in Malaysia are a sight to behold, and one species is so aesthetic that it becomes my great favourite. The red and yellow Canna flowers, the Hibiscuses, and the tree-tops in green, garnet and gold and others with flaming-red blossom drown me in euphoria. Look at those elegant, giant Lily-lotus on the water, straight out of a Chinese fairy-tale! I can see a few fishes loitering around. Someone has started feeding the fishes! He throws some bread, and

hundreds of Gouramis, Carps, and Tilapias rise obediently from nowhere to scuffle for dinner.

My morning walk brings me to the edge of a tropical rain-forest. I tickle the touch-me-nots with the tip of my shoe and they surrender like a row of falling dominoes! The grasshoppers are hopping ahead of me, like gazelles fleeing the lions. I am following an old footpath into the forest, lest I lose my way. There stands the good old rubber tree, whose latex cushions my car wheels; and whose rubber-wood is fast becoming popular and expensive these days. The different shapes, sizes and colours of the trees and shrubs are truly fascinating, I would stay here all day, if I could, and plan the start-up of a lucrative plants and nursery business. Here is a rattan tree, whose canes subdued me in school; now they make excellent furniture. Other trees have barks that resemble the skin of a dragons and dinosaurs. I am lucky to run into the white Dendrobium 'pigeon orchid' here. Even though they are common tree-parasites in this country, they only bloom twice a year. The blossom resembles white dancing ballerinas to me! I also see many perfect Y-shape twigs; coupled with elastics they make excellent catapults for squirrels, and for David, against the Goliath, but in these days of Green Peace and vanishing species...forget it. I do not mind the mosquitoes here; next time I will bring a net and round them up, to feed my aquarium fish. Hey, look at those mosquito larvae in a hollow of clear water; they are doing incredible gymnastics as they rise and fall! There are a few genteel dragonflies here, did you know that their fossils were even found in rocks 260 million years old? A yellow butterfly is fluttering around me, so carefree and delightful.

Shall I sit here and watch the fat bamboo shoots grow, to a reputed 6 inches a day? Fast enough to give a feast for giant Pandas; or shall I watch the famous Pitcher Plants, deceiving and digesting insects with their cups? They say plants have emotions and telepathy, and they grow better with human affection. Some feed on insects and a few even feed on each other! They are all here, we just didn't notice them before! Let me see what my binoculars can find here. A green pigeon is leaving speedily from a crude nest of sticks. What is that sharp chippy sound up there? Oh, it is the Crimson Sunbird, with a splendid red top and black bottom. I would pay hundreds of dollars to keep a bird like that. Look at that! Isn't that the all-black racquet-tailed Drongo on the tree top? It is! Oh, those long twin tails, what a prize; an acrobat for my aviary. Whisk... an orange-bellied squirrel races

across the branches. Fluff, something flies off the ground like an owl or Nightjar. Let me see if he has left half a mouse behind. What have we got here? 2 balls of cotton wool. Gee whiz! They are warm and alive, with little eyes, beaks and feet, the babies of the Nightjar bird! I will be kind and leave them here to grow and flourish.

There is something lurking around behind the trees, near the little river ahead of me. Let me sit still with my binoculars. Here it comes, my goodness, a bird with a blue beak, in red, black and white. It must be the Black-and-Red Broadbill. Gosh, it enters a heap of grass and rubbish hanging above the river bank. Could that be the nest? I am 'stealing' towards the river bank. The bird tears out of the bundle! It must have heard me coming. Yes, it is a nest! I can touch the eggs. They are still warm! Now, I will sit and calm down from the excitement. The little river is still; a couple of pointed Half-Beak Fish are skimming the surface. Look, there is an Archer Fish, in silent ambush behind some fallen leaves. I want to see how it spits at a fly... Hard luck. I have been sitting, waiting for 15 minutes, but the archer fish cannot spot a fly to work on. There is much serenity, and fresh air here; it would be nice to build a tree-house. Anyway, I will start finding my way back now.

I am on my way home, and I am stooping down to examine a pile of fresh-water stones left behind by some builders. They are of such appealing shapes, texture and colours. Maroon, peach, white, russet, and charcoal. I am picking a few to beautify my aquarium.

Here I am, lying in the foam bath, in total relaxation and with a smirk on my face. I'm now blowing bubbles with a straw! I can see my smile in the bubbles, washed in rainbow colours of the soapy, sparkling jewels.

Soon I find myself in the middle of a giant Malaysian Sunday market. This is really a melting pot of Malays, Chinese, Indians, Portuguese, natives, and western cultures. Two hundred different cakes, buns, pies, dimsums are dazzling me. Mouth-watering Peking ducks, roasted chicken and barbecued pork are glistening and fuming with succulence, and satay-kebabs are sizzling deliciously above the hot charcoal. The aroma of durians, mangoes, pineapples, jack fruits, star fruits, breadfruits, papayas, rambutans, melons, pomelos, sour-sops, mangosteens, lychees, longans, banana fritters, and not forgetting the cool, clean, sweet soft flesh of the young coconut; they are mind-boogling and they salivate



my tongue. I am sorry, I have to impose a communication blackout here and excuse myself, the food is too tempting for me.

That was delicious. Now let us view the pets' corner. My kids used to stamp their feet here and refused to leave until I bought something. Look, there is a mouse deer and a falconet for sale. There are lovely orchids and white-haired cactuses; little hanging green parrots, red-cheek Cockatiels, smiling love-birds, and the most beautiful of all, the Gouldian Finch, in purple, yellow, emerald, red and green. Watch the sparkle from the Golden Gourami, the Jewel Red Cichlids, the Cardinals and Neon Tetras!

After a game of tennis and an early supper, here I am at the beach, mesmerised by the charm of the dreamlike sunset, featured in pink, peach, violet and gold. The white breakers lap and kiss the shore in endless rhythm, as distant sailboats glide across the horizon. There couldn't be a happier sight than children romping near the sea. The far-away mountains bring reminiscence of misty waterfalls, babbling streams, fairy coves and islands. The variety of sea shells impresses me, in many shapes, sizes, spots and spikes!

The hypnotising colours of twilight are ever-changing. I am eager to return to practise the piano. While I'm here, I might as well catch a few grasshoppers for my melodious Pekin Robins, frolicking in my aviary. It is so easy, the grasshoppers are so blinded by my torch light, that I pick them off the grass effortlessly. Within minutes, I have a dozen insects in my plastic bag! Look here, I just caught a little Wren-Warbler dozing off on a reed leaf! I am letting the terrified bird go. Some frogs are croaking, having a great party nearby. I am shining the torch into the ditch, and catching sight of a few funny tadpoles - frog babies with emerging legs and shrinking tails! There is a weird little spider, in a leaf on the water, with an insect in its claws. Look, a few fruit-bats are dancing above me!

If the world around you is still not enough, get your science teacher to show you the microscope one day, and what you will see will stun you! Anyway, I have enjoyed every minute today, and I am so contented. There's so much to see, so much to live for. Besides, life is passing and precious, let us relish every little moment of the day, and make continuous progress. It would be sad, if we were to leave this earth at 80, without seeing, experiencing, loving and giving much. Resourceful and observant people see a lot that others miss. They have time to

watch and wonder, to feel the breeze and the sun's warm embrace. You must train your eyes and cultivate awareness, and experience the many wonders around you, which you forgot or were too busy to observe and cherish. You must exploit your inner and worldly resources fully. That is why there are great people who, despite solitary confinement, read and wrote books in jail and even acquired university degrees! Let nothing hinder or handicap you, **see and find good everywhere**.

"The measure of mental health is the disposition to find good everywhere."- Emerson.

"I'm absorbed in the wonder of earth and the life upon it." - P. Buck.

"For a child, the world is a wonderful place, endlessly exciting, full of magic. You grow older and tend to forget that the world is a wonderful place, still full of magic if you have eyes to see it." - A. Koran.

"Many an object is not seen, though it falls within the range of our visual ray, because it does not come within the range of our intellectual ray." - H. D. Thoreau.

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank! Here will we sit and let the sound of music creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night become the touches of sweet harmony." - Shakespeare.

"Go to the places that you've never been, see all the people that you've never seen, do all the things that you do in your dreams, and you'll find it's a wonderful life." - Sir Cliff Richard, in the movie *Wonderful Life*.

## Chapter 6 Exercise, Nutrition and Health.

If you sit much of the time, for most of the days and months, you are like a fish that does not swim and a bird that does not fly. If this goes on, naturally the lazy fish and bird will not live long healthy lives, and neither will you. For hundreds of years, humans kept strong and fit in their livelihood of hunting and farming, which included ploughing, harvesting, and running after the same fishes and birds! The wild-goose chase cooled with the advent of the industrial revolution, followed by computers and robots. Soon man became a mistress or mirror of his TV, a lame duck without muscles, ravaged by 'modern degenerative diseases' like high blood pressure, gout, heart attack, and other stress-related disorders which cost the world billions of dollars a year. The world should now stop eating and sleeping like a pig, and take on some exercise. The truth is that good health does not take care of itself, and if you assume it will, you may well lose it!

I belong to a fitness club here, and I would strongly advise youngsters to do some walking and running each day. Go swimming, and have a game of tennis or Ping-Pong once or twice a week. Games are exercise and hobbies and they are fun, so you need not run after the ducks and geese all the time. Swimming is perhaps the best, because it involves most body-parts, which eating and gossiping do not. In addition you can help your parents with lawn-mowing and errand-running too. The benefits of exercise are obvious: More oxygen, better circulation for your blood, the burning of excess fat, opportunities for your bodies and muscles to do what they are made for, and furthermore, the feeling of well-being, radiance, vibrancy, self-confidence, mastery and power, which are worth a lot of money, if not priceless.

An important part of exercise is breathing. The all-important oxygen, coupled with nutrients, are carried by your blood, and circulated all over, from head to toe, converting food into energy, and giving you life. At the same time, oxygen purifies the system and stimulates the electrical process of every body cell. Breathing also supports the lymphatic system, which disposes wastes and toxins, and takes part in the nutritive and immune processes. Medical experts have experimented and found that shortage of oxygen seemed to play a role in making cells malignant or cancerous! Little wonder that the minute you take a deep breath

of fresh air you feel good; and little wonder that my friends who do Yoga or Tai Chi remain so healthy and young. Their intake of oxygen is enormous. You must therefore make exercise and deep breathing your number one daily routine.

Can a Boeing 747 lift off without air intake and the right fuel? Now that you have good air inflow, your fuel is food and nutrition. Although meat and fish provide much protein and energy, as needed in the days of hunting and farming, the accent nowadays is on water-rich intake of fresh fruits and vegetables. They provide numerous important vitamins and minerals; and don't forget, almost 80% of your body is water! Doctors also maintain that enough fluid is needed by your system to flush out the poisonous waste products from cells and tissues. You are reminded that amazingly, all the beautiful and powerful animals thrive on grass, leaves and fruits, like elephants, gorillas, horses, pandas, and so on. If you eat more fruits and vegetables, you can compete with handsome Black Beauty or Ching Ching, if you eat only dried and dead meat, you will look more like hyenas and vultures, yes you will.

Let's go on a more serious note. All food intake by humans contains the following in varying proportions: 1. Proteins. 2. Fats. 3. Carbohydrates. 4. Water. 5. Vitamins. 6. Mineral salts.

Proteins are combinations of organic compounds known as amino-acids; about a dozen of these amino-acids are derived from foods, and almost an equal number is manufactured by the body itself. Basically, proteins build and repair tissues, and are a source of energy. Meat, fish, eggs, dairy products, and even vegetables provide most of our proteins. Fats are also found in similar foods. They comprise glycerol and fatty acids, provide energy, energy reserves, maintain the body temperature against the cold, and supply fat-soluble vitamins too. Carbohydrates give energy too, and are found in wheat, rice, dairy products, various crops, fruits and vegetables, and they include starches and sugars.

The energy value of food is measured in calories. A sleeping man needs about 1,600 calories of food a day, but a drain-digger needs 4,000 or more, to replace energy used. Water is everywhere, in your foods and drinks, and it is very important, because no fluid in the world dissolves things better than water! So water dissolves, digests, transports, flushes and excretes.

Vitamins are essential for proper growth, health upkeep, and defence against illness. They are called vitamin A, B Complex, C, D, E, F, K, and P-P. You must

always bear in mind that stale or overcooked fruits and vegetables lose much of their good vitamins and minerals. Eat them as fresh as you can. Mineral salts are calcium, sodium, potassium, magnesium, iron, manganese, copper, iodine, chlorine, zinc, selenium, fluorine, phosphorus, and sulphur. Quite a mouthful, but do not worry, these are age-old names, and they will not turn you into a volcano or robot. Before you fall asleep here in boredom, I will raise my voice a little here and say: All vitamins and minerals are found in all fruits, vegetables and edible things. The wise approach is to eat widely, a great variety of things, instead of dwelling on a few, then you will not suffer any deficiencies. My strongest pieces of advice are:

1. Eat a great variety of foods.
2. Have more water-rich fruits and vegetables.
3. Take less variety at one meal to ease digestion.
4. Resist overeating, count the calories and keep trim and slim. Research has shown that over-eating shortens our life span.
5. Minimise your exposure to X-ray, radiation, sunlight, alcohol, smoke, exhaust and other pollutants.
6. Eat punctually at the regular time everyday, and chew slowly.
7. Have regular exercise, and sufficient rest and relaxation.
8. Maintain excellent personal habits and hygiene.
9. Safety is part of health. Guard against injury and accident at all times.
10. Overall attitude, values, responses to situations, thoughts and feelings affect physical and mental health enormously.

Do not overlook the importance of sleep. The body and mind at rest can perform repair, maintenance and rejuvenation work. Recent research on sleep revealed that lack of sleep will invite illness, create havoc, and drive people a little round the bend. Be careful, poor diet and insufficient rest are now accepted as one of the causes of delinquency, crime, and even some mental diseases.

**Health** is, at any moment in time, more important than **wealth**. You will appreciate it more if wealth is the only thing you have left! In fact, health is wealth; it is part of happiness, and with it, you can live longer, acquire more wealth, and contribute to society! In sickness, everything goes haywire and you go cuckoo. Those who overlook health in their quest for wealth usually end up losing both. For a sports champion, health is the be-all and end-all of life. Even for a TV star, an airline pilot, a school teacher, or anybody at all, health is paramount. As you gradually advance with the good habits of exercise, taking satisfactory diet and rest, you will experience changes in yourself. Your outlook will be positive, your mind will be alert, your eyes will sparkle with enthusiasm and intelligence, and you will live a most fulfilling life.

A person's self-realisation and self-mastery hinge around physical, intellectual and moral development, which require a sound body, an expanding intellect, and a virtuous heart. You cannot have happiness and success without good health, period.

"Let your food be your medicine." - Hippocrates.

"Even in the green herb have I given you all things." - Genesis 9:2.

"The world belongs to the energetic." - R. W. Emerson.

"Ill health, of body or of mind, is defeat... Health alone is victory." - T. Carlyle.

"The human body is the best picture of the human soul." - L. Wittgenstein.

## Chapter 7 Crown Your Life With a Majestic Purpose.

When I started my first chapter, I knew I must be considerate to you through the course of this book. As children and young adults, you need to grow along a natural and gradual path. In this way, you will go with the flow and reach your desired goals more effortlessly. Thus, I will not impart success and happiness skills right away. I want you to be convinced first, of the need for a noble purpose in life, then you should have clear morals and values. Later, I will encourage you to develop your talents for the things you love; they will lead you to your dreams and goals. You will be taught many skills, to thrive and shine. How marvellous!

As we begin our discussion on life's purposes, several incidents instantly come to mind. Not long ago, a major conflict in the African country of Rwanda drove a million adults and children fleeing into neighbouring states in great hunger and suffering; many died of sickness, starvation and slaughter. Such catastrophes are recurring around the world. Wars and atrocities grew out of evil minds and hearts, or rather, the absence of these faculties. The world is now so much in need of love, grace and moral direction.

Recently, an Asian country reported that the its youths spend an average of 20 hours a week loafing in the streets, watching the world go by. Now, just count the number of youngsters world-wide. There are over 500 million in the 10-20 age group, and if they had the same habit they would have lost some US\$30 billion a week in lost productivity or wages. (Based on US\$3 an hour, 500 million x \$3 x 20hrs. 1 billion = 1,000 million.) Multiplied by 52 weeks, that is US\$1,560 billion a year, enough to feed and heal most of the hungry and sick people on this planet! Meanwhile, the world spends yearly, US\$800 billion on arms, US\$400 billion on cigarettes and US\$160 billion on beer! According to UNICEF, we only need US\$34 billion to put the world's children in good hands! Such monstrous greed and need exist together. There is so much to be done, yet so much wastage. The human race are wanting badly, selflessness and **Purpose**.

The 1994 Human Development Report, from the United Nations, cited that the richest 20% of the world's population enjoy 85% of the world's output. In Asia, 700 million people live in absolute poverty, and 600 million of them, mostly women and children, still cannot read or write. Just think how lucky you are, to be

able to read this! Poor nations spend heaps on weapons despite their people's hunger, yet the cost of one jet fighter could provide the primary education of 1 million kids! There are 20 soldiers for every doctor available in the developing world. The last few years saw more innocent children killed than soldiers. Millions died, and millions more were disabled and made homeless. The list goes on, but ignorance, indifference and heartlessness remain.

Shall we ignore all these? **No.** Shall we have some purpose in life? **Yes.** Even if some of us cannot do much, we can do a little. If everyone in the world does a little, it adds up to an astronomical volume. An excellent example of doing good is Sir Bob Geldof, an Irish musician who started pop songs and big concerts in 1984, to raise funds for the famines in Africa. By 1992 the funds have reached US\$200 million and fed millions. I admire Sir Geldof deeply. There are many of him among us, but we are just asleep. We didn't lift a finger to help others, to contribute something to society. It is heartening to know that despite the cruelty in some people, others have soaring ideals, and life everywhere is still graced with altruism and heroism.

Our hope of heroism and altruism lies in you. Youths with great directions and grand purposes in life will be the achievers and leaders of tomorrow. Live and work, not just for material goals, but for high and noble ideals. Some people live wonderfully long and fruitful lives after discovering themselves and what they really want. Their purpose fills them with great energy, enthusiasm and fulfilment. They have perpetual youth and excitement. They remain young at old age, they eat like baboons and sleep like babies, they have affection for others, and solid resistance to stress and illness. Those with a direction are alive, vibrant and charged with power. Conversely, those without a goal are like ships without rudders or dogs chasing their tails; they drag, droop, and drift along. This clearly brings out the difference between people: The feeble and the powerful, the insignificant and the great.

The wonderful thing about **purpose** is the delightful feeling of 'looking forward to something'. I know how youngsters feel, and I could imagine how my children felt when they woke up that morning last year, about to board the plane for a rendezvous with me at the Gold Coast in Australia. I could sense their exciting anticipation before they touched down with my wife and I was waiting right there a big rental car! Wow! Why? Because they had a purpose, to meet



Daddy and to enjoy and learn more about the world. And how do you usually feel on the morning of an oncoming birthday party, school outing or holiday abroad? Great! May your life be full of such feelings of anticipation.

Another wonderful thing about purpose is that it makes working towards a goal easier, I call this the 'Stepping Stone' effect, and if you love the work you are doing, it is even easier, it is a piece of cake! Two years ago, at the Matang mountain near Kuching in Borneo, my children were balancing precariously over boulders of a rippling stream. They didn't find it hard work, they enjoyed it instead. They knew that soon their fishing nets would be scooping up little shrimps and sparkling blue-line Rasboras for the aquarium! That is the 'Stepping Stone' effect, illustrated right-on!

When work is the stepping stone towards your grand objectives, you will enjoy it; even everyday chores and routine become meaningful and fulfilling. All these are confirmed by experts, who found that happiness does not depend solely on outside situations. No doubt our inner feelings are coloured by external conditions, but real joy comes from within, groomed by values, gratitude, purpose, expectations and so on.

As early as possible, determine your purpose in life and match it to something you love, be it singing, dancing, photographing birds and flowers around the world, or nursing endangered species in the zoo. Even If you are not ready to decide, have a general purpose along these lines:

My 3 most important objectives in life are to benefit: 1. Myself. 2. My family. 3. My Fellowmen.

I know that with my worthy purpose, I automatically get such strength of mind and muscle, brain and brawn. I will see myself as I want to be, impressive and powerful. I dare to be different, leaving mediocrity. I have the **I will** and **I can** attitude. In accomplishing this adventure of high purpose, I will take time to map and enjoy the journey of numerous 'stepping stones'. I am a child of the universe, with the right to be excel, and deep inside me is a special gift from God, a giant, with many talents to be unfurled, and boundless power to be unleashed. I can contribute something special and unique to mankind. I have virtually an unlimited potential for greatness. I know that a good way to start now is to become as good

as I can at whatever I am doing, and whatever I love doing. I will make some progress **everyday**.

In concluding, here are just a few examples of the many great people in history, whenever you are free, read about them. Moses and Mohammed for examples, have been viewed by many as two of the greatest men ever lived. They had a majestic purpose. Mother Teresa spent ages caring for the sick in India, and won a Nobel Prize. Florence Nightingale was honoured for similar contributions to the sick and wounded. Marie Curie's family won 3 Nobel Prizes, 2 of which she won herself by contributing to scientific discoveries! Remember Gandhi of India, and President Lincoln of the U.S.? The list goes on and on. All of them use all their abilities behind a **Definite Major Purpose**, and for them life is a romance and a glorious adventure. They devoted their lives to a cause greater than their normal selves, and left their beautiful imprints on humanity.

"There is no road to success but through a clear, strong purpose. Nothing can take its place. A purpose underlies character, culture, position, attainment of every sort." - T. T. Munger.

"There is a loftier ambition than merely to stand high in the world. It is to stoop down and lift mankind a little higher." - W. Feather.

"A fine life is a thought conceived in youth and realised in maturity." - Alfred de Vigny.

"Lives of great men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime, and, departing, leave behind us, footprints in the sands of time." - Longfellow.

## Chapter 8 Your Values.

The subject of values must follow closely our previous discussion on life's purpose. I will forge ahead here despite the dryness of today's topic, knowing that this will be one of the most important lessons in your life. This puts you on the right track, with a shower of blessings. The flowers and fruits of your life will blossom from here.

Almost all of what we think or feel hinge around our values, which are basic and exact belief systems about what is important, right or wrong, good or bad, and what makes life meaningful and worth living. Your values are the foundation on which you act and react to situations in life, and they groom your entire lifestyle. Values, like your major purpose can spark the actions that lead to great achievements; that is why crusaders fight for their religion, and soldiers go to war for their country. You gain amazing power by living for your values. You also experience a sense of direction, usefulness and inner peace. Your values are the lighthouses that guide you to your destiny, that is how important they are!

You must have complete **Clarity of Values**, otherwise, you do things that make you feel uncomfortable and unhappy later, because you are not clear about the appropriateness of these things for yourself and others. When you are definite about what is important in life, you move with confidence and make effective decisions. Most great people throughout history were very clear about their convictions. They consistently led lives in which their values, standards and actions were one. President Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr and President Nelson Mandela, for example, were conclusive about the need to erase racial discrimination in their countries.

When Florence Nightingale was only 18, she surprised her parents by visiting hospitals and charity institutions. She achieved greatness with clarity of values. During the Crimean War in 1854, she nursed and saved hundreds of wounded. Later, she founded the Nightingale Home for training nurses in London, and published a book, *Notes on Nursing*. Likewise, Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Kenny Rogers, Lionel Richie and others who raised funds with songs like *We are the World*, *Do they know it's Christmas*, and *Heal the World* had distinct values too. I could go on and on about great people, but they all have the same

clearness about what they ought to do and why they are doing it.

**Clarity of values** is one of the most important ingredients for achieving success. If your plans for accomplishment require you to do things which conflict with your moral values about right and wrong, your plans will not work because you don't have a clear conscience. To cite an example, if someone wants to help the poor by being another Robin Hood who robs from the rich, he will probably fail, out of guilt, and end up in prison too.

It is also important to determine your **Ranking of Values**, showing their order of priority and importance to you. You should therefore write down your values in order of importance, for example:

No. 1 in importance - Happy home, achievement, wealth.

No. 2 in importance - Health and beauty.

No. 3 in importance - Inner harmony and peace.

No. 4 in importance - Freedom, fun, and adventure.

You must ensure that all your values interlock and co-exist beautifully, with less significant ones trailing important ones. You must also keep them balanced and in harmony with each other.

Now I shall explain to you the importance of your **Harmony of Values**. If your values produce some fruitful actions towards your success but do not support your deepest needs, or if they disturb other things that are crucial to you, you may feel some inner conflict. At other times you may have everything and still feel discontented. Let us create and analyse a real life example: You value achievements through specialised skills, and aspire to be a gymnastic star, and you work very hard at it, so hard that you begin to miss your family's affection and even your family holidays, sooner or later you are likely to feel incongruent and unhappy, without the ideal balance.

You need also a periodical **Review of Values**, simply because you grow, while situations, environment, and the world change. Let us look at another model: Say, among one of you out there, your love for animals finally opened up your pet shop, coupled with your noble purpose of regularly donating pets for the old and sickly in various hospitals in the country. You made deliveries and exchanges, and everything went well. Your business grew fast (in line with the saying: the more

you give the more you have), and within a couple of years you had a chain of pet shops, and large breeding kennels and aquariums, exporting fish and Persian cats to countries around the world, then you built a crocodile farm. You became the managing director, drowned in the massive daily responsibility of running your big business with 500 employees. The pets for the hospitals became history! Isn't it time to stand back and look at the whole picture and review your values? What about employing someone to do some social work, and dash those pets to the hospitals again? Or to save time, just make monetary donations to various places?

Periodical reviews of values show that you ought to have **Flexibility**. (I am thorough in my lesson here; leaving no stones unturned, and no room for unhappiness for you.) Flexibility means you have to adjust to your needs. Besides, certain values should be adopted because they have curative (healing) effects for some character weaknesses. For instance, if you are a quarrelsome, aggressive or revengeful individual, It pays to put Love and Forgiveness in the top ranks of your values. This is something you should take seriously, because I can assure you, you will be a happier person after you make those adjustments. You should make regular self-examination and fine-tuning. Retrospection and introspection are important. With more experience in life, you will progressively know the values to be enhanced, and values to be subdued or discarded.

In your business world and personal relationships, do keep in mind forever that you need to know the other person's key values too, and know how to fulfil them. If you don't, at work you will lose your worker's top performance, or even lose him! A good grasp of others' values and yours is an excellent footing for relationships and inner harmony, which will usher you towards success and happiness.

"Going beyond is as bad as falling short." - Chinese proverb.

"Kindness gives birth to kindness." - Proverb.

## Chapter 9 Morality and Character.

We have just analysed values, but **Moral Values** form our most important principles. God has wonderfully written his laws and wishes in our hearts, and as a result we all have the power to recognise right and wrong. This incredible power is called **Conscience**. You must maintain a strong conscience and uphold solid morals all your life. Many people build this ‘pillar’ of righteousness by reading the Bible or the Koran regularly. (The Bible is the most printed book in the world!) With a complete set of moral values, you can acquire grace and virtues, with altruism, truthfulness and strength of character. With that you become a wonderful person, loved and respected by all. You will receive endless blessings from God. Now, let us discuss **Integrity** and **Character**.

There is a true story of a General Dean, who was a captured prisoner during the Korea War in the 1950s. Before he was executed, he hastily wrote a letter to his wife with a message for his son: ‘Tell Bill the word is integrity.’ A parent couldn’t have given a better advice to his child. If the child embraces those word and abides by them, he will live a fulfilling life. C. Simmons said, ‘Integrity is the first step to true greatness.’

Integrity is honesty, uprightness and wholeness. There is no substitute for truthfulness, and no real success in life without it. Too many young people ruin their chances for lasting success by giving in to quick or temporary gains without really working for them. Believe me, over the years, I have seen people prosper through shady manipulations of facts and figures, or by taking undue advantage of others, and true enough, their success didn’t last, and eventually they suffered setbacks and losses. It is obviously a form of nemesis from God. By the way, can you recall the crazy Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic? He spent millions on his diamonds and coronation, while his people starved. He did not stay a king for long, and was overthrown in 1979. Similar incidents occurred in Haiti in the West Indies, in Romania, in Europe and in Indonesia. You can fool some people sometimes, but you can not fool all the people all the time.

Truth and justice are expounded by all the great religions of the world; even Jesus taught: ‘Do to others what you would have them do to you.’ It is sad to note, that tricks, cheating, and corruption are so rampant in some societies that many

people suffer losses or poverty unfairly. But things change, fortunes turn, retribution (punishment) sets in, and our character, mental and spiritual qualities are the enduring assets which time cannot disturb or diminish. They glow with pride to the end. The person who treats everyone and does everything with integrity, has no fear or worry, he has peace of mind. His strength and goodness will be beaming throughout his world and his lifetime; he has **Character**.

Character displays man in his highest and noblest form, and is one of the most respected and powerful features of a person. It is what we really are, our worth, our blood and soul; whereas reputation is only what others think of us. Our character is more important than reputation, because it is moral substance, not just name-tags. Bertol noted, 'Character is a diamond that scratches every other stone.' You must therefore, live as a person of backbone, principles, truthfulness and virtues. Without strength of character you are reduced to some kind of animalism, you become more like a worm or parasite. Instead, always give your best, work honestly for your dollar, shine above the crowd, and carve your good and lasting impressions on mankind.

In ending this lesson, I want you to bear in mind that **Truth** is a very important thing in this world. It defeats almost everything else, because truth is nothing but truth, truth is honesty, and truth is facts and knowledge. When you have these 2 things: **honesty** and **knowledge**, you are powerful, and rich.

"Ability will enable a man to get to the top but character is the only thing that keeps him from falling off." – Anonymous

"The spirit of truth and the spirit of freedom - they are the pillars of society." - Ibsen.

"Men of character are not only the conscience of society... for it is the moral qualities which, in the main, rule the world." - S. Smiles.

## Chapter 10 Starting Off with Simple Balance and Common Sense.

Now that you have understood your purpose and values, it is time to start afresh, like a sprouting leaf amidst the clean morning air in spring. I want to impress on you, that life is simple, but we complicate it, because many of us are chasing wealth, adventure and dreams (I'll be going your way too, providing you the impetus and momentum as we move along). But I don't want you to miss the beginning, the sweet simplicity of life, with all its harmony and inner peace. Pick up any book in the Buddhist religion; much emphasis is on tranquillity and contentment.

Once I watched a boy on TV, riding a giant sea-turtle in the waters of the South Pacific. The scene left a permanent imprint in my mind. Now I surmise that a fisherman in his little boat off Tahiti, may be happier than the high-powered executive at a giant electronic company, churning out TVs, computers and Karaoke sets, and rushing feverishly amidst the human and concrete jungles of Tokyo. He needs US\$ 0.5million to get a golf club membership; works hard to get away once a year, to fish and snorkel off the beaches of say, Tahiti! He returns to work harder, hoping to retire in a better environment. But he had to trudge a long way, the fisherman was there first! There is happiness in simplicity.

Over the years, I met several people who left lasting impressions in me. They had sparkle in their eyes, contented smiles and gentle, confident ways. Their inner peace radiated patience, tolerance, yet enthusiasm and vitality. They achieved these by harbouring healthy values, and practising relaxation and meditation. They have reduced concern and commitment for the labyrinth of material goods and complex modern lifestyle. They recognise that life is about people, not things. If you are clever, you will emulate them and find joy and peace, not just at the end, but all along the way. They say success and happiness is a manner of travelling, not the destination. So remember to mix work and play en route. Go for the beauty in simplicity, the balance and harmony.

Life is simple, because the ingredients needed for a contented life is quite basic, requiring no great skills or talents. Life becomes complicated when you stop listening to: 1. Your conscience, which is God's guidance. 2. Common sense, which recognises simple truth, and 3. Cause and effect, which shows there is a



reason for everything. Problems also arise when you yield to temptations which draw you to wrongdoing; your state of grace and balance is then disturbed or lost. Life ought to be simple because the cosmic intelligence and forces of God's universe have set up everything for you. You are already the greatest living miracle! Your lump of grey matter still outsmarts the latest computers. Your brain's chemical and electrical energy sends hundreds of impulses and reflexes throughout your body in seconds! Your heart beats 72 times a minute, 2,600 million times in your lifetime without batteries! It pumps 1,800 gallons of blood a day, through 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the body, long enough to wrap several times around the earth! If that is not enough to amaze you, each body is made up of almost 100 trillion tiny cells, containing the magical DNA, which provides the genes to make sisters or twins look alike. Not to forget the good old tummy and other organs, which perform hundreds of functions each day, digesting, filtering, purifying and absorbing foods, and all you need is a couple of hamburgers, drinks, and if you like, a bit of the spinach that Popeye fancies. So what is there for you to complain about? Everything is set up for you!

The wonderful cosmic intelligence is all around you. The bees build 6-sided honeycombs knowing that these compartments merge and stack up better than round ones and store more honey. The spider weaves a nice geometrical web without mathematical lessons. The daffodil hears the oncoming spring and breaks through the soil with its blossom. We could write a million books on these wonders of nature! So do not worry about life, just do your best all the time and occasionally, go and catch a fish, light a fire and drink from the coconut on the beach!

Now you move on confidently, with a clear mind, healthy body and spirit. A great way to enjoy perpetual balance is to form a habit of caringly **listening to your body, listening to your mind, and listening to your subconscious.** In this way, you derive fuller common sense, and live with better power and control.

**Your body** constantly conveys to you its physical needs, to operate at full potential. When you are hungry, it is time to eat, when you are thirsty, it is time to drink. People who delayed their lunches and dinners ended up getting gastric problems that gradually developed into stomach ulcers. When it was time for the gastric juices to digest the food, the food wasn't there, and the gastric juices started to nibble the walls of the stomach, causing ulceration eventually. I have

observed people like my parents, who kept consistent lunch and dinner times and went on to live very long lives. Your body is like an engine, preferring neat schedules. It lasts longer than those living in confusion. Likewise, when you are tired, it is time to rest or take a cat-nap. It is funny how some people find it hard to relax or sleep, whereas to a cat, a nap is the easiest and most natural thing to do!

Pay attention to your body's signals which may show overworked or infected systems. These are fatigue, irritations, pain, loss of appetite and concentration and other anomalies. Watch out before something serious develops, and attend to alarms before situations deteriorate. I will touch more on health in subsequent chapters. Bear in mind, that nutrition, exercise, rest and relaxation always restore your body to its full operating capacity.

The next thing to do is to listen to **your mind**. I focus on the mind instead of emotion; because from experience I know that by relying on your mind, you have better control of everything else. When you take care of the mind part, the emotion and its related problems tend to take care of themselves. Sounds neat and cool, doesn't it? We will learn more about this in the later part of this book. Now, when you listen to your mind and occasionally you are troubled with things like boredom, frustration, jealousy, anger, disappointment, annoyance, worry or fear, you must quickly recognise these as negative feelings, which have ruined human well-being since time began. The things you must do then, are:

1. Switch off these negative feelings instantly and decisively, whenever they occur. If they still linger on, then,
2. Do a complete check, of your purpose, conscience, values, beliefs, attitude, needs, self-confidence, environment, kindness, patience, forgiveness, and so on, and make the necessary adaptations and adjustments with a clear and rational mind.

We will go into details about these feelings in later essays to ensure you are armed to the teeth to face any upset. This is just to give you a preview, of the need to communicate with your body and mind. It is normal to have negative emotions when your needs are not met, such as: Recognition, social contact, peace, recreation, and so on. The negatives and problems disappear when you clearly understand the causes, and make appropriate remedies. So you see, life can be simple, and it should be.

Next, you listen to **your subconscious**. The subconscious is a big topic to be

elaborated later. For now, the skill of listening is basically the development and use of your **Intuition**. Intuition is a God-given and effective form of guidance, which helps you to judge and decide on various situations and issues. Experts find that intuition is a very real and practical guide in our lives, even-though it is abstract and hidden. It is truly based on rich experience and information, all collected, digested and stored in your subconscious. You don't realise it is there, but it is. You get that feeling of: 'This is not right to me.' 'I feel that's the way to go.' We all feel that nudge at one time or another.

As you grow and gain knowledge and experience, your intuitive power expands. Use it to your advantage. Whenever your intuition is weak, make auto-suggestions to strengthen it by saying: 'All right decisions exist now inside me, my subconscious guides me day and night.' Your subconscious will obey you imperceptibly in due course. Sometimes people ignored intuition, they wanted conscious and courageous control of their lives. It was a show of strength without listening to that Inner Voice, and true enough, they ran into problems. I have personally experienced that myself. Please listen to that inner wisdom, as you grow and progress.

You build a vast reservoir of Common Sense by listening to your body, mind and subconscious. This keeps your feet firmly on the ground, instead of wandering in the clouds. There is nothing magical or mysterious about basic success techniques, which are simple, well tried and proven ways for good living.

Another important skill I want to impart to you, is the ability to enhance your feelings of **gratitude** and **contentment**, which in turn bring you inner serenity and equilibrium. These feelings are important and will be further discussed in my next lesson. If you are thankful and satisfied about all the good things around you, you automatically feel happier. Always realise how lucky you are. For myself, I wake up every morning and say: 'Almighty God, I can't thank you enough for giving me another new day, because no one knows when he will die, this is a gift I must be thankful for. I can't wait to enjoy every minute ahead of me, for my accomplishment.'

The grateful mind is a positive mind, so engrossed in all the good things that it has neither room nor time for anything unpleasant. Another way of achieving contentment is to develop yourself as fully as possible, and fulfil all your potentials. Remember as Epictetus noted: 'Everything can be divided into 2

classes, things which are within our control and things over which we have no control, and it is the point of wisdom to live for the one and not let the mind be disturbed by the other.' Acceptance, tolerance and contentment are the key to successful living.

My concluding plea is: Please remember always that inner peace comes from harmony with yourself and the world around you, with full submission and satisfaction. You flow with nature's breeze and current. Accept all situations, whether good or bad, they are part of a divine scheme and purpose, of God and His universe. Live life by being your true self, with no pretence or conflict, no fear or worry; by being free of the past, free of any blame or grudge. What counts is your ability to enjoy life at its fullest, in a simple, balanced way, at this very moment.

"Simplicity...It is an integration, a stability, a settledness, a straightforwardness, a purity of the mind that is often expressed in a simpler lifestyle...a more intelligent use of time, less clutter, less financial chaos, fewer involvements - in other words, less world and more peace." - Hugh Prather.

"The happiest people are those who seem to have no particular reason for being happy, except that they are so." - William Inge.

"Plenty of people miss their share of happiness, not because they never found it, but because they didn't stop to enjoy it." - William Feather.

"The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance; the wise man grows it under his feet." - J. Oppenheim.

"Take away the cause, and the effect ceases." - M. de Cervantes.

## Chapter 11 Your Mental Attitude.

I consider this essay to be the most essential of the 100 chapters. Please sit up straight and read this carefully, and read this over and over again, in the years ahead.

Today, let us talk about **Mental Attitude**. It is extremely important because all riches, whether material or intangible riches (like wealth, friendship, knowledge, joy and overall well-being) begin as a **state of mind**, over which you exercise sole freedom and control. You can tailor your own thoughts and actions towards a fulfilling life, or if you are silly enough, let worry and whining cripple you. Interesting to note, your mental attitude is the offspring of your values and purpose. So a positive mental attitude is the starting point of the good things in your life. This disposition comprises all the desirable ingredients that you must cultivate, such as hope and confidence, integrity and character, enthusiasm and drive, kindness and tolerance, humility and selflessness, courtesy and responsibility, the list goes on.

Your mental attitude towards life will form life's attitude towards you. It will determine whether you succumb to life's problems, or you breeze through with triumph and flying colours. Here I am dying to let you hear from a man of immense experience, Mr Jack Addington. In his book *100 Per Cent Mind Power*, he recalled counselling over 20,000 troubled people in 36 years, and guess what he had to say? I will tell you later, but someone who has helped more than 20,000 troubled people has certainly mastered most of life's problems.

He said all those years had taught him one thing: **Man is his own worst enemy**. Each of his patients thought his predicament was special, yet Mr Addington found that each one had the same problem. Each one had in some way under-valued himself and his ability to succeed. Each one had failed to channel his mind into some meaningful pursuits to gain fulfilment. Each one of them thought many things were against him, when in fact, he was against himself! Each one had neither self-esteem nor purpose, and did not find something to love and work on; instead he blamed the world. There you are, everything in a nutshell!

Mr Addington also made an interesting discovery, that psychology began to work the minute the person was willing to give it a try. As soon as he changed his

thinking, took a fresh look and gave clear directions to his inner self, his outer experience began to change! Mr Addington soon developed the technique of Self-Direction - the art of directing the subconscious mind into channels of good use. He said, 'That which a person believes about himself, that which he confidently expects and anticipates, will become his experience.' The great writer John Milton summed it up nicely: 'The mind in its own place, and in itself can make heaven of hell, and hell of heaven.' The minute you change your attitude and approach, your environment changes, and the world turns around to befriend and help you. How wonderful! You don't need another lesson from me, least of all 89 more!

Every now and then, problems will pop up in your life and you need a positive mental attitude to rise above them. Let me caution you: Be strong. There will come a time of great challenge, even something of a crisis proportion, where life will be extremely unfair, and your endurance and faith will be pushed to the limits. Be tough and hang on. Many people rise above these tests to become stronger and better people. The weaker ones let these difficult experiences wreck their lives.

Over the years experts have found - and I have learned too in my own experience - that all sufferings had a purpose, which fitted into God's divine schemes. For example, being often away from my family was a setback, but this boosted my income substantially. My wife and I missed each other more; besides, this has inspired me to write some good letters to my kids, and hence this book for children and youths around the world. All hardships toughen and groom us for the opportunities and greater things ahead, and no one can dispute that. You must taste the bitterness of suffering, to enjoy the sweetness of success.

I read of famous pop singers who survived some of the darkest hours in their younger days. In courtesy, I will not mention names. One of them was down and out and even lost his beautiful girlfriend. He almost killed himself, and had a brief stay in a mental hospital. Later he rebounded with positive attitude and **fortitude**, and went on to be a rich and famous composer-singer. He later married a more beautiful girl than the one he had lost! Some people have a remarkable ability to rise from their misfortune, and find a meaning that empowers themselves and others. The M.A.D.D. movement, or Mothers Against Drunken Drivers, is an example. After a mother lost her son, she willed to make a change and a difference

in the world. The message here is: Use your suffering to empower yourself and others.

I believe fortitude is a significant substance in us. The Oxford dictionary defines fortitude as ‘courage in pain and adversity.’ It is recognised as the thing that saves you in desolation. Always press forward with strength. No matter what happens, you take responsibility. This reminds us of great people like Joan of Arc, Sir Winston Churchill, and many others who showed such bravery and resolve.

Another component of our positive mental attitude, which has the wondrous habit of making us happy, is **gratitude**. People with gratitude are probably the most fortunate in the world, because they are content and thankful for what they have, and they see good in everything, everywhere. This is so important that I devoted one chapter to ‘finding and seeing good everywhere.’ Always be grateful for what you have. A person who is oblivious of the goodies around him might just as well be a nail or be dead. Let me land you in a helicopter, into a war and famine zone, like the ones that erupted in Rwanda, or Somalia. Drown yourself in the stench of thousands of dead bodies...among husbands dying in the arms of their wives...collapsing children whose parents were hacked to death in front of them... and you will have a lot more gratitude. So never take your belongings, your brothers, sisters, parents and even your colleagues for granted, shower them with your love, care and interest. You could have been without them, standing injured and forlorn on the African desert. Just reflect on this for a few minutes...

We should be so engulfed by all the good things around us that we have no time for anything unpleasant. When we were young, we stumbled, cried a little and the next minute we were up and engrossed in some new-found games. This is the amazing rebounding ability in children, which adults have lost along the way. Grown-ups are easily swept away by troubles. They should emulate these qualities in kids, who are always expecting the best from their surroundings, taking a few knocks and getting up again to look for more delightful things. Youngsters tend to enjoy every minute of their lives, every game, every nap, every snack and every companionship.

Please keep these 3 words in your permanent success-vocabulary: **Attitude, Fortitude, and Gratitude**.

If your attitude towards the world is good, gracious and grateful, and you feel the world is treating you well, you’ll get pleasing results. **Give your best to**

**the world, the best will come to you.** If your demeanour is negative, don't expect any favour or fortune; the universe has no favourites. You can start cultivating the right attitude today, by treating everyone you meet as a precious person. I will cite an example to conclude this chapter: Last week my friend Paul wanted me to choose a new guitar for him. The first shop we entered had a shop assistant who gave us the I-don't-think-you're-going-to-buy treatment. In the second shop, the sales lady was so fond of us and her guitars... The guitars were almost the same, but you can guess where we bought it from!

"A good mental attitude is even better than mental ability." - Anonymous

"I have only to do my job, great or small, and look often at the trees and hills and sky, and be friendly with all men." - Grayson.

"Your attitude can: Make you or break you. Heal you or hurt you. Make you friends or make you enemies." - D. E. Galloway.

"All things are ready when the mind is ready." - Shakespeare.

"You should always tell yourself, 'It's not because of my success that I'm content, it's because I was content that I succeed.'" - Alain.

"Make the most of what you have. I operated, full time, on that precept." - Estee Lauder.

"The important and decisive thing in life is not what happens to us, but the attitude we take toward what happens." - Zig Ziglar.



## Chapter 12 Self-Knowledge and Self-Image.

All over the world, many people stumbled into success quite unexpectedly, after discovering themselves, or something they enjoyed doing. Many of these discoveries came late in life, for various reasons; so some folks actually dragged along for the first part of their lives, boring themselves to death at the same old desks. Wouldn't it be nice to trip over something enjoyable and be successful at 20 instead of 45? You could skip those 25 years of boredom with little pocket-money. Furthermore, by the time you are 45, you are miles ahead of the guys your same age, in your Ferrari with your bursting wallet. What a difference, to start early!

Monica Seles, Martina Hingis and Boris Becker became World Tennis champions in their teens. Tiger Woods won the U.S. Golf Masters at 21. Two of these four people started their game at the age of three! Steven Jobs of Apple Computers and Bill Gates of Microsoft are also glowing examples of early birds. They were the wonder-kids in blue jeans who left college to fiddle with computers. Their obsession created such great computer products that they became America's youngest billionaires before they were 30! (1 billion = 1,000 million). After Microsoft was listed on the stock exchange, its assets, products and market expanded explosively. Consequently, Bill Gates now ranks among the richest men in the world, with assets of over US\$40 billion.

Conversely, successes like President Abraham Lincoln, and Ray Kroc of McDonald emerged much later. They started late, through no fault of their own because many factors came into play. I have read hundreds of books on success, and I know that success depends on various agents, skills, opportunities, and even accidents, being combined in various ways and proportions. We will study these technicalities in details later. Notwithstanding the many factors involved, it is still better to begin early. Let us get to know you a little better here, and in the next chapter, I will help you to discover your talents!

Shall we play a little game here? I will list down 50 different traits and I want you to put your scores from 1 to 10, next to them:

YOUR TRAITS	SCORE	YOUR TRAITS	SCORE
1. Your strength of ambition		26. Thrift & saving	
2. Ability for dreams & goals		27. Flexible & adaptable	
3. Optimism, humour		28. Enterprising	
4. Your burning desire		29. Organised, methodical	
5. How focused are you?		30. Speed & efficiency	
6. Will & determination		31. Affirmative mind	
7. Social grace & courtesy		32. Love for nature, music	
8. Sociability & friendliness		33. Able to shun negatives	
9. Kindness, altruism & love		34. Cautious, not careless	
10. Your self-esteem		35. Courage, fortitude	
11. Communication skills	36. Improve continuously	37. Good memory	
12. Winning image, charisma		38. Love for work	
13. Health, beauty conscious		39. Can empower others	
14. Good daily habits		40. Gain respect, support	
15. How obsessive are you?		41. Open mind, foresight	
16. Assertive & dominating		42. Habit to go extra mile	
17. A doer not just thinker		43. Independent	
18. Creative & imaginative		44. Competitive	
19. Artistic, with good taste		45. Alert for opportunities	
20. Practical & set priorities		46. Endurance	
21. Energy & enthusiasm		47. Love wealth, comfort	
22. Good usage of time		48. Self discipline	
23. Good knowledge of self		49. thirst for knowledge	
24. Confident & decisive		50. How intuitive are you?	
25. Observant & inquisitive			

Now add up your score and divide by 5. If it is 90 you are good, if it is 70 you are average, and if it is 60, you are below average, it pays to go through the list and ask yourself: ‘Why didn’t I measure up? It’s high time I make some drastic improvements before I fall behind.’ In the months and years ahead, you must make **periodical checks** and **assessment** of yourself and your weaknesses. Some people fall into laziness, bad company or depression, until it is too late. View and examine yourself objectively and clearly. Know your faults and correct them immediately.

There must be millions of unsuccessful people on this planet who are bogged down in jobs that they don’t really like. They never found the trigger to fire their exploding energy and potential. Don’t let this happen to you. I know that for most of us, we had to take whatever that came along at the beginning, but you must still push tirelessly towards your final goals and the things you love. You can

do this within the scope of your job, or start doing things as part-time hobbies. You can poise yourself on stepping stones, in waiting and grooming positions until your time comes!

Elvis Presley was a truck-driver. President Reagan was a movie-star. Charlie Chaplin was a regular loafer. Walt Disney was a jam-maker. (Although there was a remote resemblance between jam and water colour, his subsequent success was quite different.) From paupers to kings, indeed. Many millionaires were born poor; humiliation and harsh-reality often spurred people to success when their problems became opportunities, and their frustration, creativity!

The choice of careers is a very important decision in anyone's life, but it is not as difficult as it looks. It is best to get down to the basics. If you have strong self-esteem, good looks, gift of the gab, and sense of humour, you can go into show business, and evolve into a little Oprah or Bill Cosby. Add leadership, knowledge and experience to that and you can aspire to be another Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher or Tony Blair. If you are the strong-silent type with high IQ and liking for numbers, you should consider working for the Statistics Department. If you love the fresh air, have average brain but much brawn, you might want to try the crocodile farm in Florida or Australia. Jokes aside, you should pick your profession wisely, by analysing your background, talents, strengths and interests.

Now you should be well convinced that you ought to know yourself, find your interests early in life, and develop from there. Next, you take your first step into life's arena; but be careful, there could be a hiccup here, a global disease lurking around. Experts know that everyone is a living miracle, born to win, but due to some kind of universal curse, he soon develops inferiority and limitations. I think someone should invent a magic potion to rinse our brains daily. I suggest that parents remain on their toes when they bring up children, lest they utter or imply anything negative. Seldom do the world realise, that negatives are deadly in a child's formative years. Such acquired limitations are so wicked that I will 'exorcise' them, in another chapter on faith and beliefs.

The great Oscar Wilde once wrote, 'To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance.' The wise and successful person is content with all the imperfections he is born with. He sees no reason why he should not harbour full confidence and self-esteem, and make the best use of what he has. Make that your

life-long creed. You must now take great pain and care, in grooming every cell and chromosome in your **self-image**.

The greatest psychological finding of this century is: Self-image. It is the total mental picture of yourself which you carry around with you every minute of the day. You may not be aware of it, but it is there, complete to the last detail! This image grew out of the beliefs you formed about yourself since the birth. This image determines your level of self-esteem. It is the basis on which your entire personality, behaviour and even environment, are built. It is also a prime motivator. Dr Samuel Johnson declared, 'Self-confidence is the first requisite to great undertakings.'

Fortunately for us, our self-image can be drastically altered and enhanced. Improvements must be made however, at our inner core, not just patching up the fringes. When you lose a soccer game, make sure you think and say: 'We lost that one game, we'll win next time.' instead of: 'I'm a hopeless soccer player, a real failure.' See the great difference that makes? The damage from that second sentence is quite incisive, though you may not know it. So be careful how you treat yourself. Experts believe we have great reservoirs of ability, even genius, which we fail to utilise fully, instead we are wrapped up in the silly game of trying to match or resemble other people. In more severe cases, cowardice, inferiority and self-doubts have impoverished millions of people, stay clear of those pit-falls at all costs!

In order to change your self-image successfully, you must, in the privacy of your soul deeply recognise yourself as a fresh, new person, and go on to harness and enjoy all your new-found strengths and qualities. Your agenda should include new dressing, grooming, and a novel outlook on everything. Experts have been so amazed by the results of new approaches taught to weak students, and the outcomes of plastic surgery on people. In general, to succeed and to live happily, you must accept, like, believe and trust everything about you. Be proud of yourself, your thoughts, words and deeds, and be convinced of your worth and competence. Your self-image will blossom naturally from thereon. You will find soon that little can stand in the way of your self-esteem and confidence.

Take care of your self-image and regularly reinforce it, by feeding your subconscious with boosting, inspiring thoughts. Your subconscious will accept what you regularly think. To put things short and sweet, you just simply believe

**you can**, and have the ability to do it. For more difficult things they just take more time and practice, that's all. Next, take your confidence further and go to the extent of challenging yourself, saying: 'This is almost impossible but I can do it.' Others have attempted to prove to their families, friends and even enemies and have succeeded!

Throughout history, many people performed incredible feats, and many of them said that it was the **I can** attitude. Edmund Hillary, Mark Spitz, Mother Teresa, Bill Gates, and hundreds in the Guinness Book of Records did it. Go to the library and read more about them. In subsequent essays, I will equip you with more things to boost your confidence to its highest level. In the meantime, I want you to take a deep breath every morning and say: 'There's a God-given force inside me, waiting to burst into a thousand fireworks of flying colours, from now on, nothing real or imaginary can stop my advance towards greatness and glory.'

"You also have to have a certain amount of conceit, which leads you to believe that you and you alone can get things moving." - Roy Cohn.

"He who undervalues himself is justly undervalued by others." - Hazlitt.

"Then one has the astonishing experience of feeling united with one's self, not in pride and false self-satisfaction, but in a deep self-acceptance. One accepts one's self as something which is eternally important, eternally loved, eternally accepted.... There is a centre, a direction, a meaning from life." - Paul Tillich.

"Self-image is all-important. It is for everybody, and anybody who says anything different is telling lies." - Charles Williams.

"The next time you watch a star performer on stage or TV, look for this inner quality. I don't care whom you pick - all great show business personalities have it. It is their winning self-image that allows them to rise above the others..." - R. L. Shook.

## Chapter 13 Talents, and Discovering Your Share of Them.

I wanted to get you excited about talents, geniuses and prodigies, but I realised I should not sow any delusion (false idea), so I will be a poor suspense-story writer by letting the cat out of the bag in the 1st sentence of this lesson, and the truth is:

Talents are more common and less used than you think; for talents to lead to great success, they must be diligently developed, and manifested in the right time and place, to fulfil people's needs.

Long ago I was a school teacher, teaching English and Art. I went through some 20 classes. In every class of about 40 students, there were always 2 or 3 (about 6%) who were good in drawing and painting; and another 2 or 3 with excellent English or Chinese calligraphy (handwriting). I was also one of them! Apart from the prizes I won in various art competitions, I haven't made a single dollar from selling works of art, or from calligraphy! I taught myself to read music without a single music lesson, and play the guitar and piano. People say I am musically talented, but I know that I am only a little talented in art, the musical side was more of interest, not talent. So you see, enthusiasm can really magic-carpet us away.

In recent years, Karaoke-singing grew in popularity, and I found on every occasion that 1 in every 10 (10%) was a very good singer. With 10% of the world as very good singers (10% of 5,000 million), there should be some 500 million Elvis Presleys around. By the same token (6% of 5,000), there should be 300 million Picassos world-wide. Where have they gone? You may say there is no market for millions of singers, but Elvis, Michael Jackson and Elton John have made billions between them, and could have shared that with thousands of others. It is clear that a lot of talents are lying dormant, and my statement still holds: Talents are more common and less used than you think, and they must be diligently developed, and manifested at the right time and place, to bring great success. Elvis and the Beatles did exactly that.

It is often said that talent is wealth, and knowledge is power, but in reality, they are only potential wealth or power. They will not attract achievement and riches unless organised, and ingeniously directed through strategies and hard work to a goal. If you read about big talents like Walt Disney, Henry Ford, Soichiro

Honda, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber and Steven Spielberg (who produced colossal hits like Jaws, ET, Poltergeist, Close Encounters, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Jurassic Park, etc), you will find that they did a tremendous amount of work behind their world-class achievements.

Whenever I hear about someone being talented, I automatically ask: What does he do? Does he work? The notion that a genius can have great accomplishments without effort, is trash to me. Since the dawn of time, almost all individuals of extraordinary achievements paved their years with frustrations, perseverance and hard work. They made full use of their talents and their will and relentless quest for excellence earned them a permanent place in the hearts of humankind.

I did much reading on the subject of talent. The conclusions arrived at by the experts hinged around the following points:

1. There are chicken-or-egg-first situations where innate gifts give rise to interests, efforts and special achievements, and conversely, interests, efforts and achievements also cause talents to emerge.
2. The majority of children are born capable of cultivating impressive skills for great performance in certain areas, if the environment and circumstances support these developments.
3. The evolution of special abilities is not a straightforward matter, with humans as complicated organisms, compounded by multifarious inputs of values, nursing, parenting, stimulation, environment, involvement and hard work.
4. Despite variations in infancy, the presence of appropriate opportunities, conducive surrounding and supportive parents are vital to the growth of skills and talents.
5. Prodigies were often inborn potentials, with developments going **right on target**, and **coinciding beautifully**.
6. In the cases of mathematical and memory geniuses, people were dazzled by their feats and overlooked their background of special interests, obsession, pursuits, lifestyles, and mathematical parents that engineered the unusual capabilities. (For example, a New Zealand boy in Christchurch who entered university to do mathematics at 12, is the son of a very proficient and sought-after mathematics tutor.)

7. Musical talents had casual, yet frequent and delightful exposure to music in childhood, followed by their free exploration and enjoyment of music over a long period, coupled with practice, facilities, human support, deep-seated motivation and pleasure.
8. Special accomplishments are the fruits of enthusiasm, persistence, obsession, the unlocking, maximising and culmination of abilities.
9. In the past, great mathematicians and engineers lacked higher education, and were largely self-taught and swayed by interest.
10. The 4 keys that unlock talents are: Attitude of parents and child. Self-image. Problem-solving skills. Motivation in useful activities.

So you see? There you are, no lazy, sleepy talents, only enthusiastic and diligent ones! Before you identify our talents, let us look at the different types:

- A. Cognitive, perception and imagery talent.
- B. Artistic talent.
- C. Expression talent, as in dancing and singing.
- D. Communication, verbal talent, wit and sense of humour.
- E. Sensory-Motor & physical talent as in sports champions.
- F. Creative and problem-solving talent.
- G. Musical talent.
- H. Mathematical and memory talent.

The above are obviously inter-related in varying degrees. Your cognitive talent complements your artistic one by helping you to see things clearly before you paint a beautiful picture. Likewise a ballet-dancer blends expression with sensory-motor ability. There are smaller and less visible innate gifts such as: Inquisitiveness and focus, optimism, motivation, perseverance and will-power, and they must be cultivated for maximum results. The talent to recognise and use other talents are important too!

How do you discover your talents then? Simple, first you listen to feedback from your family, teachers, and friends on your cleverness. Secondly, you try your hands at various things available or conceivable: Tennis, chess, crossword puzzle, brain-teasers, intelligence or math tests, singing, dancing, music-playing,



swimming, public speaking, debating, drawing, knitting, carving, pottery, story writing, computer-operation, computer games, growing flowers, building and creating things, or anything good and useful you can think of. After 6 months you should recognise what you are good at.

As I end this chapter, I am suddenly overcome by a deep feeling of indebtedness to my father. Before I started school, he taught me Chinese calligraphy, in addition to the drawing I enjoyed doing. Many nights this baby was pampered with beautiful melodies, of bedtime music that my father regularly played. I was the one at my father's bed when he died in 1991. My Mum was a wonderful housewife, so cheerful and kind. My parents had triggered the growth of my interests and abilities. Likewise, I have also incited my children's love for piano and music. I hope someday for the same reason, my children and perhaps some of you will feel indebted to me.

"We all love to win but how many people love to train?" - Mark Spitz, winner of 5 gold medals at the 1976 Olympics

"We are shaped and fashioned by what we love." - Goethe.

"Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration." - Thomas Edison.

"Someone in the audience said to a famous pianist: I would give up many things to be able to play like you. The reply was: That was exactly what I did." - Anonymous.

"I'm in no way saying that we are born businessmen instead of becoming businessmen. I would be the last person in the world to propose such a theory... I was in no way a born businessman." - J. P. Getty, world-class businessman and billionaire.

## Chapter 14 Building Hobbies around Your Talents for Maximum Success.

It is heartening to see that youths are naturally bent toward pastimes which bring knowledge, skills, joy, friendship, patience, relaxation, mental and physical health. Have some hobbies, they are fun. Basically hobbies are:

1. Playing games and doing things. 2. Learning and analysing. 3. Collecting things, and 4. Making things.

To give you a good insight and thorough selection, I am listing a few dozen hobbies here: Aerobics, Antiques, Aquarium, Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Ballet, Basketball, Bird Watching or Keeping, Bonsai growing, Botany, Bowling, Canoeing, Carving, Chess, Coin Collection, Computer, Cookery, Cycling, Drawing, Dress-Making, Fashion, Fishing, Flower Arrangement, Gardening, Golf, Guides and Scouts, Gymnastics, Hockey, House Plants, Insect Study or Rearing, Jungle-Trekking, Knitting or Crochet, Magic-Showmanship, Model Trains and Planes, Music, Netball, Painting, Pets, Ping-Pong, Poetry, Pottery, Puppet-Making or Showing, Sailing, Scuba-Diving, Singing, Skating, Skiing, Soccer, Softball, Squash, Stamps Collection, Swimming, Tennis, Toy-Making, Wood-Working, Writing. Enough to keep you busy and to send all your worries packing!

If you know what your talents are and you build your hobbies around them, you will have a beautiful combination and a fulfilling life. You are simply killing three birds with one stone! While you are enjoying your hobbies, you are continuously building your talents and your career. Your talents and hobbies reinforce each other and continue to grow, building your skills, your mental and physical power. Do not miss this superb arrangement.

This coalition coincides with the experts' findings, that many people with special liking for something often developed some obsession for it. They stuck to it and eventually the opportunity came and BANG, they became rich or famous, or both. Just read about Bill Gates, Steven Jobs, Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Louis Pasteur, Steven Spielberg, Abba, the Beatles, all the soccer and tennis

champions, and hundreds of others and you will know what I mean. Geniuses? Yes, but developed ones. Their special interests, hard work and performance actually boosted their talents in return! Aristotle wrote, 'There's no genius without a seed of madness.'

Now, I can almost visualise Paul, of the Beatles, dashing to John's house with his guitar. Likewise, others like Per and Marie of Roxette, and Emma and Mel of the Spice Girls were obviously doing the same. No one can argue that hobbies have taken wings and led to fame and fortune for many people, who hardly expected their pastimes to turn into championships in the fields of invention, science, art or Music!

Harvey Mackay suggested, 'Do what you love and you'll never have to work a day of your life.' Just keep at the things you enjoy, and work hard. If fame and fortune do not appear soon, or if they do not appear at all, does it matter? In the meantime you could cleverly position yourself onto a **waiting position** or **stepping stone**. If you love nature for example, and aspire to be a naturalist who combs the world photographing wild life and writing about them; before you have the funds to launch your expeditions you could work in the local zoo or in the library, reading and learning your dream. If you have good looks and talents in singing and dancing, work in a music shop and keep enjoying your songs and dances. Your auspicious opportunity and that big promoter will appear one day. Besides, your parents like most parents, will go all out to help and guide you, because your well-being is their greatest concern.

There is a word of caution here. There are certain jobs where it is obvious that little development or reward will come to you. You must not fall into this kind of dead end, trap or 'talent-confinement'. Find something related, or totally different where you have some abilities too. For those of you with little or no talent - which is unlikely - you should wisely choose an area where success does not depend heavily on giftedness. In many cases around the world, people's self-image, optimism, hard work, desire and determination, etc, were so powerful that they nevertheless succeeded. I know too, that you will somehow find success and happiness, regardless of the difficulties on the way.

"Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is

more common than unsuccessful men with talent..... Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." - T. Watson, builder of IBM, one of the world's greatest computer companies.

"Hobbies take your mind off things that are worrying you, allow you to recharge your batteries, expand your horizons, increase your self-esteem, expose you to new ideas, and let you have fun with people you like." - C. A. Leatz.

"Ah! Beat on your heart, that's where genius lies." - A. de Musset."Genius is quite simply the ability to reduce that which is complicated to something simple." - C. W. Ceram.

"Genius is only a greater aptitude for patience." - Buffon.

"It takes very little talent to succeed in most cases, but it is vitally important that you use whatever you've got to the maximum degree..." - Michael Korda.

"If someone seems to progress without an error others ascribe it to some kind of genius. Success depends more on common sense than on genius." - An Wang, founder of the well-known Wang computer company..

"Time must be found for relaxation or you would break down nervously." - Al Koran.

"He who would have beautiful Roses in his garden must have beautiful Roses in his heart." - Dean Hole.

"If people knew how hard I worked to acquire this talent, they would no longer be surprised." - Michelangelo, the famous artist.

## Chapter 15 Freedom, with Responsibility.

Children and youths need sufficient freedom to advance their hobbies, and talents, and their social, physical and intellectual development. Most parents understand this, and despite back-breaking schedules, they are busily involved in children's birthday parties, summer camps, and scouts and girl-guides activities. All wise parents grant freedom progressively, with their children's age and growth of discipline and responsibility. Incidents of broken antiques at late-night home parties are not unheard of, so are those of parents' cars being turned into scrap metal by teenagers. We also know that a large percentage of road fatality occurs in the 16 to 26 age group; statistics speak for themselves. Freedom for the young is therefore a package deal; it comes with responsibility, and consequences.

The irony about freedom is: When everyone is completely free, no one is! Complete liberty ends when you deprive others of their liberty. If there was complete freedom, the zoo warden would soon walk his lions in the public park, the Airbus captain would land his aeroplane beside the pyramids to provide better sightseeing, and you would drive over the sidewalk, through the florist shop and create a drive-in shopping mall!

So you see, freedom always has its limitations, you have no right to behave as you please, only the freedom to behave as you should. It is not just your right to use your judgement and choice, but also your accountability and obligation to live with the consequences. Just look back over the years, humans fought very hard for freedom, but soon they had to make many laws to control themselves. America, with the famous statue of liberty, has always been a tolerant and dynamic country, willing to pay any price for freedom, but now, look at its high incidents of gun ownership and divorce.

Away from the public scene, and in the home environment, constraints on your freedom are rooted in your parents' deep love and care, and their powerful urge to protect you. Your parents' interest in you is far from casual, and anything imaginary or real that may threaten your safety and well-being is of grave concern. Among older teenagers, there is that universal dispute over what time they should get home. Teenagers should put themselves in their parents' shoes to suffer the fears when kids do not return at the appropriate time. Parents' fantasies include:

bad company, beer, drunken driving, horrific car crash, robbed in the park, and the worst, trying drugs. By the way, when you get into drugs, your whole life is ruined and you are as dead as door nail.

I believe youths should, instead of romping in the night, take up wholesome hobbies and fruitful studies to secure a good future. Family outings and activities are better, they are not only fun, they enhance family affection, unity and the resultant growth and good life. As you grow, you will learn that without discipline it is hard to attain much success or happiness; besides, discipline keeps you out of harm's way, accidents and loose living. This is also part of your respect for authority, like the authority of parents, teachers and your future employers.

Freedom is also one of the greatest gifts from God. He has taken great risks and made big sacrifices, knowing that liberty in the hands of the irresponsible can lead to troubles, evil, and destruction, and it often has. Liberty was abused right from the start, by our great grandparents in the Garden of Eden! Respect your freedom, it is a great privilege. Freedom must be earned, and the more responsible you are the more will be given to you.

"For free will to exist, evil had to exist, in order that man's choice might be his own...God had to put man's will beyond even divine intervention." - Meyer Levin.

"True, no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, yet afterward to those who have been trained by it, it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness." - Hebrews 12:11.

"The price of greatness is responsibility." - Sir Winston Churchill.

"Be happy while you are still young. Do what you want to do, and follow your heart's desire. Remember that God is going to judge you for whatever you do." - Ecclesiastes 11:9,10.

## Chapter 16 Love, Kindness, Generosity and Forgiveness.

Today there is so much neglect, hunger, and hostility in the world. That is putting it mildly, pictures and reports from Rwanda and Bosnia can chill my bones and ooze my tears. Recently, there was a newspaper account of Mrs Gore's visit to Rwanda. (The wife of Mr Gore, Vice President of USA.) She later picked up a baby who had been numb to people's gestures. The infant had seen both his parents hacked to death days earlier. He felt so bony, stiff and frigid in her arms. Love was impossible and unknown to this child. I am lucky, I live in one of the world's best countries, New Zealand. How wonderful! Many of you are equally lucky too; most of you have so much love and joy. We must thank Almighty God, day and night for this.

The same love and kindness that you grew up with could solve much of the world's problems, if only people would lend a helping hand. Robert Browning the great writer warned us, 'Take away love, and our earth is a tomb.' Robert Holden concurred when he wrote, 'Love is best defined as a universal life-force. Without love, perhaps there could be no life.' In Chapter 7, I told you that the richest 20% of the world enjoy 85% of global wealth. Their cups run over and their Rolls-Royces, yachts, private jets, and huge mansions often lie idle, gathering dust. One modern-day King even has a 1,000-room palace! Tell me, how many beds can you sleep on at night? Can you even eat \$300 worth of food a day? Many millionaires can give away millions of dollars a month and still keep their comfortable lifestyle. Unfortunately, not everyone is a good Samaritan. **This will be a better world when the greedy can give to the needy, and when the power of love conquers the love of power.**

There is much sorrow and bloodshed around us, it is time we turn hatred into love. It is time everyone has a change of heart. It is time to promote the virtues of kindness, forgiveness and generosity.

Love begins at home and should flow into our workplace and our neighbourhood. If we love our family, our job, the people around us and give our best efforts and services, it is hard not to succeed. One of the many examples is Oprah Winfrey. She revealed that in her regular prayer to God, she offered her life as a vessel for God's work. She gave much of her wealth, and received more in

return! Countless instances, around the world and throughout history, point to a universal law: If you give love, kindness, care and service to your family, employers, colleagues and customers, a fulfilling life is guaranteed. Going that extra mile, winning that extra edge or giving that extra help will make a world of difference. If you give without expecting to receive, you put the world and even God in your debt! You will be rewarded later, and often in a manner beyond your dreams. So be nice to others, your love empowers others, who will empower you in return. If you sow seeds of love and kindness, you will enjoy an endless harvest.

Love begins with our attitude. Kind actions start with kind thoughts. If we have the right attitude, with almost selfless, unconditional love, we want whatever is best for the other people's well-being and happiness, regardless of our inconvenience and sacrifice. Bear in mind however, that to love is to be vulnerable, because in business relationships, we are open to trickery; and in personal ones, we are exposed to hurt and rejection. We have to be loving but vigilant, strong yet forgiving. Some people are reserved about giving love unless they are reciprocated equally, but what about those without parental and human love? What about that Rwandan child in Mrs Gore's arms? How can they learn to reciprocate if people keep deserting them? So it takes efforts, often it will take all our strength and our bleeding hearts, if we want to make the world a better place.

Mother Teresa, the Nobel prize winner, spent most of her life helping the sick and hungry in India. I had a teacher, whose recent funeral almost made the town stand still. For most of his life he regularly visited the sick in hospitals, quietly helped the troubled and gave alms to the poor. This is the greatest love of all, like the divine, infinite love of God, and it is not easy, it requires efforts and sacrifice. You will experience God's love and power flowing through you, when you give much of yourself to your fellowmen. On the other hand, the loneliest place on earth is probably a human heart without love, the body becomes a tomb.

The above 2 persons' lives contrast so sharply with those who exist merely for themselves, with the perpetual thought of: What is in it for me? Sadly, these people harbour the wrong idea that they can only advance in the world at the expense of others. They can, but not for long, believe me. You need not compete or take from others, you just **create and add!** There are numerous opportunities on this vast planet for introducing and making new things. There are new paintings, books, songs and products emerging everyday. No one can have all the



true riches without enriching others. You prosper when you add to prosperity. When you create, produce and provide more, everything multiplies, like the Multiplier effect in economics.

This expansion is not just in tangible goods, but in knowledge, ideas and spiritual well-being. The age of computers, fax machines, mobile phones and Internet have increased the incomes of the world a hundred fold! You are now the creative focal point of the universe, the 'multiplication' must come from you personally, you have a duty to contribute. Find ways to maximise your abilities, creativity and productivity. There is no need to compete or take from anyone.

Generosity is a wondrous quality, do give more than you receive. It is said that the takers eat better, but the givers sleep better. You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving. Besides physical things, your care and compassion for people cost little, but they are invaluable and have great impact. Often your kind words and deeds can make a big difference in someone's life, someone among your family, colleagues, friends or even strangers. That person may even catch on to your virtues and pass them on to others! I now recall an incident, where my wife gave some money to a poorer relative and upon her return, she won a new TV at a lucky draw. The more you give, the more you have.

Victor Hugo gave a beautiful description when he wrote, 'Life is the flower of which love is the honey.' All great religions in the world instil and incite love, kindness, generosity and forgiveness. We cultivate these virtues by being more open, demonstrative and less selfish. Furthermore, we accept others with their imperfections and weaknesses, which are after all, parts of the variety of life. We learn to be patient with others, forgiving them for their wrong. Remember the saying: To err is human, to forgive divine? If we cannot forgive how can love survive, or even exist? Do not allow any negative feeling or grudge to occur, or worse, to take roots; just voice your annoyance and let it pass. Kindness is the ability to love people more than they actually deserve. It is the consideration and awareness for other people's feelings, difficulties and needs, with tolerance and forgiveness. It is like an oil that takes the friction out of life. How beautiful is a day, touched by kindness!

Consistent demonstration of love erases hostility and negative emotions. As you change your thoughts and gestures towards others, they change towards you. Forgiveness melts resentment, anger and selfishness. It warms the heart and cools

the sting! It saves your energy too, and life is too short to waste it on gloom and glumness. So forgive, and in the end you will feel relief and joy. I have lived long enough to know that too well!

In concluding, I must remind you to love and take special care of yourself too. Can we truly love others before we learn to love ourselves? Before we have health, peace, self-acceptance and contentment? The excellence of your interaction with the world will only be as good as the quality of your relationship with yourself. This lesson is an important part of happiness. Happiness is a mental attitude, a grateful spirit, and a heart full of love!

"In the final analysis we must love in order not to fall ill." - Freud.

"Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do them beautifully." - Anonymous.

"The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love." - Wordsworth..

"Give what you have, to some it may be better than you think." - Longfellow.

"We can cure physical diseases with medicines but the only cure for loneliness, despair and helplessness is love." - Mother Teresa, one of the world's most revered women.

## Chapter 17 Respect and Love Your Parents.

Parents are great gifts from God, and orphans would be quick to agree wholeheartedly with me. Just sit still for 5 minutes and visualise the loss, emptiness and distress of some children, who lost their parents in infancy, and were brought up by relatives or strangers. Think of the probable shambles in their world. It is time you feel truly thankful.

The Bible and the Koran say: Parents are God's representatives on earth and we ought to love, revere and obey them. We show reverence by having a high regard for them, speaking to them or about them with full respect. Let's be forever grateful for the great trouble they took, to bring us up from babies to adults, from crayon to perfume; 21 years of attention, worry and care, all free of charge! By the time they have spent the money to put us through university, we are all they have left! When you have children of your own, you will know what you owe your parents.

When we were babies, our parents had to change our nappies regularly and wake up every night to feed us. Occasionally we got sick and they stayed up all night, trying to comfort us amidst our tears. In my experience my wife and I went to the extent of consoling the crying child with embraces, songs, strolls and car rides under the stars! I remember one night, a motorbike accidentally hit my wife and the pram with my daughter Vinny in it, she got up quickly, first to make sure Vinny was okay. Haven't you heard of a story about a mother who lifted a car to free her child? Aren't mothers great?

Kids who have never been on their own may not appreciate fully all that parents have been doing for them. Since birth, the parents have cared for them daily, provided food, clothing, a home, toys and education. If kids had to hire someone to do all that for them it would cost them a fortune! Some parents made great sacrifices, letting children have things first, and my wife always says: 'I want to give them what I didn't have.' Children should therefore repay some of these bounties by returning love, respect and obedience. All the rules and restrictions imposed by your parents are out of love, for your own good and your future.

Someday, when you have children of your own, wouldn't you want them to understand, respect and care for you too? Learn to accept the subordinate position

you have now, so you can learn, then handle the greater responsibilities of adulthood and parenthood later. We love our parents by doing our best to please and help them, especially when they are old and sickly. We should love our brothers and sisters the same way, because they are God-given companions. They are precious, and those without brothers and sisters will agree with me. It is towards what we cannot have that we feel grateful.

Who would love you and care for you the most? Your parents, casual acquaintances or strangers? Modern societies overlook the importance of the 'family nest' at their peril. Some parents think they can raise their kids by remote control! There have been unfortunate girls, who left home because they could not find love, warmth, mutual respect and understanding there. They fell in love and got married at 18! By 19 they were divorced and became solo-parents. Soon they got into bad company, alcohol, drugs and crime, and the rest of their lives were awful. It was sheer stupidity to think that their outside acquaintances or immature boyfriends could care for them better.

Experts have found that delinquency, crime, failure and unhappiness are caused largely by lack of love, care and guidance at home. It is high time that children, parents and the world appreciate the sanctuary, sanctity and greatness of the family. This awareness would erase much of the world's chaos and heartbreaks.

Many Asian households should be congratulated for the impressive coherence of their families. Youngsters leave home not to go flatting, only to get married! The eldest son and his family usually stay on with the parents and care for them until they age and pass away. The concerted care and shared attention that Asian siblings give to their elderlies are equally praiseworthy. So my advice to you is: Do not leave home before you are 21, before you are mature and wise enough to look after yourself. Your parents love you and they want to take care of you.

Some naughty children may think that parents, unlike them, should be neither seen nor heard, but they still live under one roof, so let us look at some vital tips on how to live with your parents, brothers and sisters:

1. Feel and show your delight in seeing your parents, brothers and sisters at all times.
2. Listen attentively when you are spoken to.
3. Never argue with them, if you are emotional about an issue, calm down and discuss later. Parents are human

and occasionally you may feel they are unreasonable. You must still reason gently with them. Respect and courtesy help tremendously and are the only ways to go. 4. In helping your loved ones, you invariably support yourself, think about that! Give great assistance by answering doors, phones and running errands. 5. Respect privacy by knocking on doors and refrain from making nuisance. 6. Remember birthdays of all at home; give gifts and celebration. 7. Be enthusiastic and supportive of interests among members of your family. 8. In introducing friends to your parents, show respect by saluting them first: 'Mum, this is Tom.' 9. Greet your parents' friends courteously at all places. Welcome visitors at home, and seat them before calling your parents. 10. Do not interrupt your parents or anybody when they are talking. 11. Discuss private matters privately with your family members, not in front of outsiders. 12. Respect the properties of everyone, ask for things instead of ransacking their drawers and cupboards! 13. Always be apologetic and forgiving. 14. Parents, brothers and sisters should love and enjoy one another's company, and give each other the best time, help, mental and spiritual support, through life.

Wise parents are ever-ready to understand and forgive their kids, no matter what happens; knowing that even God had difficulty handling His first 2 children! So they cannot expect parenthood to be a piece of cake. Hence, the spiritual, emotional and tangible support in the home is immeasurable. Nothing can match the loving bond found here, the strongest and most beautiful union, since the beginning of life on earth.

"My mother was the making of me, she was so true, so sure of me; and I felt that I had someone to live for; someone I must not disappoint." - Thomas Edison, great inventor.

"The bride received a little car as a wedding present! On the windscreen was a card with the words - With all our love, Mama and **Pauper**." - Anonymous.

## Chapter 18 Friendship.

Some people can feel lonely living in a city teeming with people. This is the paradox of modern society. People must now intermingle more and reach out with hands of friendship, because the sharing of delight and distress, of work and recreation is part of nature, and adds to a fulfilling life. Without hobbies, interests and real friends, no one can claim to be truly happy. There is nothing worse than a self-centred, inward-looking, withdrawn, lethargic, zestless, friendless existence, out of tune with the world. When we limit ourselves to a small circle of acquaintance, we tend to acquire or cultivate some form of narrow-mindedness. We should instead, groom ourselves to regularly meet new people and ideas, and develop as broadly as possible our horizon of contacts and consciousness. Our capacity for a wide sphere of associations is also a component of good luck, which I will analyse and discuss in detail later. You wouldn't refuse good luck, would you?

The following boost our much-needed ability to win friends:

1. Have genuine interest and liking for people. Remember names.
2. Have a positive attitude, which puts everyone at ease, with good humour, cheerfulness, sincerity, courtesy and zest for life.
3. Be an excellent listener, be absorbed in their topics and issues. Interests enhance friendship and chances for more friendships.
4. Accept imperfections, accentuate positives, avoid differences.
5. Show delight, gratitude, appreciation, humility and receptivity.
6. A give-and-take spirit, caring and giving more than receiving.

The list goes on, but this is quite sufficient. The rest relies more or less on our good judgement, common sense and wisdom.

Now that you have won many friends, you should understand friendship. After our family, our friends follow closely in importance, because they provide a variety of enlightenment and support to supplement those of our family. In the absence of our parents, brothers and sisters, especially when we are out of town attending university or working, our friends assume great significance and

influence, and they usually take over some roles in our family's absence. Their company is less demanding and involves less boring routine like vacuuming and lawn-mowing, so we can dwell better on carefree and fun things. Friendships reinforce our identity instead of changing it, and doing something with a friend somehow increases the enjoyment of that experience. When things go wrong or get tough, a good friend can really comfort and empower us.

We can choose our friends, usually on the basis of common interests and complementary goals. However, we should be careful about our choice. Friends can bring us success and happiness; they can also lead us astray, into squandering and failure. When friendships merely patch up people's feeling of boredom or insecurity, and help to pass the time, their real value and potential for personal growth are minimal. The existence of pub-pals and beer-buddies illustrates this point. They drift away the hours with gossips and teases, games of darts and cards, which, other than good relaxation and business rapport, could well be a waste of time. People (with little warmth at home and poor realisation of inner resources) fear loneliness, and usually become addicted to this kind of daily pastimes of joking and drinking. Some took the fun further into drunkenness and gambling, and that is exactly where wastes and doom begin to cast their ugly shadow. Stay clear of these people and such behaviour!

The choice of friends is extremely important because as a rule, we tend to become like those we continually associate with. This also reflects on the type of person we are, and will be in the future. Choose friends who have **character**, **moral sense**, **virtues**, and **noble purposes**, people who are positive, kind, and courteous. In the event of one of us going astray, the other, as a real friend, should speak out bluntly against wrongdoing.

Despite all the criticisms, friends can be priceless treasures, and those who have none are social paupers. The finest friends are those in adversity, those who can share our burden and weather the storm with us. The fair-weather pals come only to split our fun and fortune. Real friendship is not withered by time, it remains evergreen over the years. True friends are therefore like diamonds, few, lasting, and precious, and false friends are common pebbles.

After years of research, experts confirmed that people experience the most positive moods when they are with friends, which sometimes outshine those provided by their spouses and families. This occurred across the spectrum of ages

from children to elderly. Even among modern, happily married couples, the manner of treating and respecting their spouses as their best friends actually boosts marital bliss!

It is in the company of friends that we enjoy the freedom to communicate and shine. Above all, all human interactions are grounds for learning, imparting, helping, redoubling joy and lightening grief. Can you recall Chapter 4? The experts concluded that the extroverts who spend time mixing, talking and laughing with people are the happier ones.

One day, when we are old and grey, we will recall with emotion those bitter-sweet memories, the great outings, vacations, adventure and excitement we shared with our families, and friends. Those wonderful buddies in primary school, high school and university, with whom we have lost touch and may never meet again... All those memories will bring tears to our eyes.

"People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges." - J. E. Newton.

"This communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in half." - Francis Bacon.

"A friend is one who gives you the spark of assurance when you doubt your ability to fulfil your noblest aspiration, climb your special mountain, or reach your secret goal." - William A. Ward.

"It is the individual who is not interested in his fellowmen who has the greatest difficulties in life....It is from among such individuals that all human failures spring." - Alfred Adler, psychologist.

"Life is to be fortified by many friendships. To love and be loved is the greatest happiness of existence." - Sydney Smith.

"My best friend is the one who brings out the best in me." - Henry Ford.



## Chapter 19 Good Manners and Etiquette.

You will agree with me, that the only place where we can condone bad manners is in a movie like *Mr Bean* or *Rambo*. In real life no man is an island, and you will not get very far if people find you rude and crude, unless you want to be a Robinson Crusoe; but then you will not go very far either, until you build a boat. Regardless of your looks or character, if your mannerism is offensive, you lack miserably the key ingredient of a winning personality.

Many people overlook the far-reaching effects of courtesy and social grace. When beset by failures they give excuses like bad luck, poor market environment and even office politics. If they have problems with colleagues and clients, they may actually be losing their respect, affection and support. Some may breeze along initially on knowledge and expertise, but most livelihoods involve other people and thus require much social intelligence like consideration for others, a spirit of give and take, harmony and teamwork. If you are socially skilful, you can get away with some mistakes, but if people dislike you, they may even help you fail! So watch out, if you have the habit of smiling to your cash register instead of customers, you may not be smiling long!

The pressure of population and survival sees the disappearance of courtesy or even the smile. You only need to sit in an Asian city bus and watch the old lady running, panting, to catch up with the bus-driver. Finally she struggles to get one foot in, while he speeds off. Later, she has to alight from a moving bus at her destination. Then there are the waitresses doing their best everyday, to drive customers away. I pity these people. Their lack of compassion has failed them as human beings. In our modern life of go-getting and rat-race, we are tempted to put others as bottom priorities. This is bad for the well-being of the general public, and is short-sighted behaviour because courtesy oils the wheels of society, and brings a smoother and sweeter way of life.

It is sad to see many incidents of rudeness around us. Sometimes, a speeding car splashes the puddle on your new dress, then turns the corner without signal; another flings rubbish out of its windows. Some speeding drivers cannot bear to have a vehicle in front of them. Others seemingly drive to revenge and not to get to their destination. You get a door slammed on you, then you have cigarette

smoke blown onto your face at the food-bar. At another time, the drugstore girl keeps you waiting while she paints her eyelids, but the stranger in the public phone-booth will let you wait forever! Some people talk, or sneeze loud enough to wake their neighbours, then they pick their noses in public. In the cinema, you might hear a couple plan their entire new house right through the movie! Some girls have to wrestle with their suitcases at airports while colleagues whisk out of sight; and elsewhere, ladies have to stand in buses. Some folks do not listen or look at you when you talk to them, and you don't get introduced when you meet them and their friends on the street. Others read magazines in the house when they have visitors around them. Occasionally you sent out big presents and received complete silence! Then a friend came late to your dinner because she was too absorbed in a clearance sale... Endless examples of ill manners, they are awful.

Nowadays, both courtesy and discourtesy are contagious, so why don't we revive good manners and spread them again? Hopefully, people might catch on! Some children seem to be natural mimics who act like their unpolished parents despite teachers' efforts to refine them. Others with boorish parents have the hardship of learning table manners without ever seeing any! Here are some good tips before bad manners creep up on you:

1. Use these words often: Thank you. Good morning. Good day. Please. Excuse me. Pardon me. May I...? I'm sorry for...
2. Give way to others, hold the door, be considerate at all times.
3. Listen attentively and give others your undivided attention.
4. Send thank-you cards, congratulation and get-well cards, etc.
5. Give balanced attention to everyone at a conversation, without neglecting any individual.
6. At an introduction, salute the senior person or the lady first, then introduce the junior person.
7. Understand how each person wants to be treated. Be sensitive.
8. Table etiquette requires that you do not speak with your mouthful, that you ask for things without stretching or standing up to grab them. You do not use fingers unless your hosts sportingly lead the way, and do not put your elbows on the table until dinner is over. Table manners must have been invented by people who were never hungry! Read more books on these.

9. Dress and mingle appropriately at parties and various functions.

It is good to do refresher-reading on etiquette periodically, lest we slack in these areas. Although the days of rigid rules have gone, we are still judged continuously by our conduct and social grace. Good manners can always be acquired by painstaking efforts, with the habit of minding small things and doing little acts of kindness. It is also the ability to put up with bad manners. A polite person for example, never yawns in front of others, and he doesn't notice others yawning! Politeness alone is not enough, it must come from sincerity and true courtesy, which costs nothing and yet it buys priceless blessings. Kind words are free, so we should use them to please and empower people. Courtesy is a fortune in itself, a key that opens doors to other people's hearts and leads to sunshine, opportunities and riches. Many businesses owe their success to customers and friends who remember and cherish their kindness. Courtesy is often better than looks and talents. With your ability to interact beautifully with others, there is no limit to joy and wealth; without it, there may be just nothing at all.

"Whoever makes the fewest people uneasy is the best bred." - Jonathan Swift.

"Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine, ... They give their whole form and colour to our lives." - Burke.

"If I had twenty tongues, I'd preach politeness with them all - for a long experience has taught me that its results are tangible...It is the Aladdin's lamp of success." - George Williams, ex-bank president.

"Manners are the happy ways of doing things." - R. W. Emerson.

"To be humble to superiors is duty; to equals, courtesy; to subordinates, nobility." - Anonymous.

"Kind words conquer." - Indian Tamil proverb.

## Chapter 20 Communication.

Imagine, being born to parents who are deaf and dumb, being taught in schools that use only sign language, and living in a world that is completely mute! You wouldn't become very intelligent, would you? We would still be writing in calligraphy and travelling on horses, without computers and jetliners. You probably wouldn't understand this book; I would be swinging and hollering from tree to tree and my wife would be called Jane. Over the years, children from orphanages have proven that without mingling and communication, people grew up sad and dull. Communication is that important, in social and business environments, in love, in life.

First of all, communication is a vital social skill, with which you win people to your way of thinking, making life and success easier for yourself and others. You can influence and change others with little effort and without their feeling of surrender. You gain affection, respect and co-operation. Such proficiency is part of the winning personality and the mastery of relationships. Conversation, for example, is an art, and like all arts it can be improved by analysis, intelligence and practice.

The 1st step for young people like you is to overcome shyness, if any. You can dispell shyness by boosting your self-confidence through self-affirmation (as mentioned in my 12th Chapter); then you just relax, warm up to people, and cut the ice with a smile and phrases like: 'How are you today?' 'You must be from my school.' etc, and you carry on from there, It is quite easy. Building up expertise takes more thinking and practice, of course.

While gossiping is an exercise of the tongue, conversation is an exercise of the mind! It is wiser to choose what you say than to say what you choose! Be an expert and ensure that every word you use is good and pleasing, and that it doesn't jeopardise goodwill, confidentiality or your integrity and responsibility. The art is not only the saying of the right thing at the right place, but to refrain from saying the wrong thing at the tempting moment! Remember always, that in any conversation, it is better to listen more and talk less; unless it is absolutely necessary. You may recall with embarrassment later, that you were talking when you should have been listening. It is equally important that you forget the I, me,

mine line of thoughts, and get interested in the other person's topics. The great Mr Henry Ford said: 'If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from his angle as well as from your own.'

In your real life situation, if you argue with your sister often, it only goes to show the bad I-me-mine attitude, impatience, poor thinking and the use of wrong words. Another obvious blemish in the art of social dialogue is the filling up of silence, with chattering of things which have no purpose or value. Communication should in fact be like a good game of tennis, with fruitful exchange of ideas and enlightenment. There is also nothing wrong with silence, silence is golden. A common flaw emerges when someone arrives at a subject on which he has strong opinion but little knowledge. He jumps in with swinging arms, churning jaw, a raised voice and a show of ignorance!

Kind words are short to utter, but they have endless echoes and far-reaching impact; avoid blunt words with sharp edges! Beautiful words on the other hand, can empower others, who will empower and help you in return. Isn't communication wonderful? It is also interesting to note here, that choice of words is easier on certain subjects, and sometimes in certain languages. There are 30 different words for love in Greek; in English, it is just one, for the love of pizzas, love of children, love of boyfriend, love of husband, love of scenery, everything! In the light of our not-so-perfect English vocabulary, we have to be more considerate and forgiving on any occasion of misunderstanding. Friends and sometimes even spouses, can also be won or lost by careless tongues. Be careful.

As we move from the social context and further afield in business, good communication is even more imperative. After all, life is basically a selling of ourselves, our products and services. A pleasing personality with the gift of the gab enables us to sell, to profit and succeed. The consistent choice of the best possible words is not merely a matter of expression, but a process of thinking intelligently and concurring as far as possible, with your clients and associates.

Amassing and wielding a large vocabulary put you on a strong footing, you can then express yourself clearly, effectively and convincingly. (At one time, I took my children to the library every other day, to cultivate their reading habit and build their powerful vocabulary.) With that strong foundation, you just think, pick the best words, put in the appropriate feeling, vary the pitch of your voice for

effective expression, and supported by the right body language, you are off, towards winning, and prosperity!

In addition to your vocabulary, skills in **pacing and matching** the response of people enhance the quality of rapport - the communication bond, the accord with people's disposition, feeling and opinion. We can further strengthen that tie and harmony, by going further in pacing and matching a person's breathing, posture, expression and interest! While words affect the other person's conscious mind, the physiology is working on the unconscious! Cues and expressions like 'You are right; I see your point; sounds good to me,' and so on, help tremendously.

Bear in mind too, that we are living in a world of powerful mass media, of an information revolution, of endless computer messages, Internet, radio, TV, movies, magazines, books and signboards. Your journey to success entails endless attracting, convincing and persuasion. Your ability to care and to listen is of paramount importance, because the more you get the other person to talk, the more he reveals his personality, needs and weaknesses, allowing you to influence him by capitalising on his vulnerability! This is a secret technique I am imparting to you.

Later, when you operate on a larger scale, your ability to develop rapport with the masses can be potent and prolific. You only need to study the style and charisma of great leaders and celebrities to know what I mean. Think of John Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Bill Cosby, Oprah, and watch how pop star Bruce Springsteen 'talks' to his audience, touching their eyes, ears and hearts! The use of oral communication is a must for successful leadership. The leader speaks in terms, anecdotes, and illustrations which people quickly grasp and embrace, completing his sway and sweep over his followers. Public speaking is a significant facet of the business world. Please learn more about public speaking in the libraries and in practice in the forthcoming months.

Basically, good speeches depend on extensive homework and preparation, impressive projection of personality, self-image, correct breathing, clarity, a pleasant speed and pace, good pronunciation, voice manipulation and modulation, good knowledge, vocabulary, sense of humour, grooming, poise, gestures, posture and a captivating style. These qualities are also needed in normal conversation, where speech are often ruined by talking too much or too hastily, by fumble and

mumble, and worst of all, by the monopoly of a conversation and the inability to listen to others. There is a tremendous amount of skills in speaking! They dress your character and personality, cultivate them.

At the work place, communication is a vital tool of management. Effective exchange of information and ideas is a fundamental force in the development of individuals and the company as a whole. Here the degree of success is intimately dependent on the appropriateness, ease, clarity and overall quality of communication. So you see, verbal and written skills are important everywhere. Even tennis champions and various sports stars rely so much on cues, communication and encouragement from their highly-paid coaches to succeed. I am communicating with you right now, like the coach and his champion!

Last, and no less important is the rapport and interchanges among the loved ones at home. The level and quality of communication in the family can make or break relationships. In the first place, how can babies grow into good adults without proper guidance? How can family members share their knowledge, opinion, decision, encouragement, joy, sadness, and love? Thoughts, words and deeds are extremely important, in building a wonderful home, and a beautiful and fulfilling future for all.

"Miscommunication, poor communication, or no communication will create problems." - Zig Ziglar.

"Good communicators often become great leaders.... Remember: A boss says, 'Get going!' A leader says 'Let's go!'" - George Shinn.

"A powerful agent is the right word. Whenever we come upon one of those intensely right words the resulting effect is physical as well as spiritual, and electrically prompt." - Mark Twain.

"A gossip is one who talks to you about others; a bore is one who talks to you about himself; a brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself." - R.S. Zera.

## Chapter 21 The Winner's Image.

Our physical appearance, dress and mannerism are the first things that meet people. They are our loudest introduction to the world, and it is only natural that people judge us on our looks before they get to know our strengths and weaknesses. We will never get a second chance to make that first impression! A good image is a great asset everywhere, it talks before we speak. Another reason why appearance is so important is its tie-up with our self-esteem, social and commercial skills, habits and conduct, health and fitness, background and even character, all combined synergistically to make that strong entity. Have you ever realised that throughout the day, other people look at us more than we look at ourselves? Since our image is so vital for doing well in the world, you would think that grooming should be a daily concern, I think it should be in your flesh and blood, as entrenched in you as breathing and heartbeat, because your image grows on you.

It is often said, don't judge a book by its cover, and all that glisters is not gold; but I have learned from experience that what we see is often what we get. (Over the years I have learned to read character from faces too.) Tell me, would you go back to a doctor who looks like a shabby and shaky grave-digger? Or to a dentist who resembles a butcher from the slaughterhouse? I wouldn't. (I don't intend to play down any profession here, but image should also match the nature of work.) We all want a doctor who is calm and clean, a dentist who is careful, hygienic and humorous. People are even more 'touchy' with heart surgeons! I can remember visiting a doctor once, who was more like a part-time practitioner. A lean, fragile person at an old desk, with an ancient, rusty torch light that shone into my throat. I thought the rather shabby clinic was more suitable for a tattoo outfit! I did not get well fast, nor did I return to him again. These days, with the well-proven, miraculous healing power of the placebo pills (dummy tablets), I believe the right look and personality of a doctor is quite sufficient to cure the patient. It is all in the mind.

The building of a winning image requires that you start at the very core of everything, because everything counts. Whatever are created and developed inside us are revealed externally to discerning eyes. When happiness gets into our



system, it breaks out on our faces. A long face, a positive mind and a happy heart seldom go together. So, we must first ensure our emotional well-being, boosted by peace, contentment and a positive, forward-looking attitude. Next, we pamper ourselves with nutrition, health, hygiene, and ample sleep. Our faces should project radiance and energy, not fatigue and dissipation. If good looks are based on sleep and nourishment, many people these days must be suffering from insomnia and malnutrition!.

For teenagers, I understand they can feel like strangers in their own bodies at a time of rapid changes and growth. Nonetheless, let's take special care of ourselves. Simple hygiene and good habits cost next to nothing, but they do much to improve our attractiveness, which is enhanced by things like tidy hair, sparkling face, shining eyes, spotless nails, white teeth, pink gums, weight control, and so on. A clean mind is revealed in a clean body. Conversely, we can judge the character of those with unkempt hair, dirty fingernails and crude and careless clothing!

With a healthy body, we then move on to improve our posture, breathing, voice, gaze, gait and gesture. Don't stand like a saxophone and acquire a hunchback! Mind you, our posture and physiology can affect our moods and feeling, which I will discuss further in another chapter. Without good posture and breathing, our body cells, muscles, and the entire nervous system cannot be cleansed and energised. We must stand and sit confidently and comfortably, without stooping and slouching. The ideal walk is neither slow nor fast, neither jumpy nor feet-dragging, relaxed yet confident, energetic yet smooth and unruffled.

Now, it is time to dress up. These days, clothes are so important that people say: You are what you wear. Mr John Molloy, in his book *Dress For Success* cited how in an experiment, a respectfully-dressed 'actor' received obliging service from 42 of the 50 secretaries he approached. In another situation, the same actor, more flashily and radically dressed, received good attention from only 12 of the 50 secretaries tested! In an additional experiment, a gentleman had the task of delivering envelopes to 50 executives. In a beige raincoat (often worn by executives), he needed only one third of the time that he spent delivering in a black raincoat (often worn by the working class). So you see, you draw different response and treatment with different attire. Sloppiness may not cost you much

money, but it can cost you much more in other ways, it may even cost you your job! Would you last another day as a bank manager or a doctor if you came in with a punky, crested gladiator hairdo? Weird, crazy, outlandish, noisy and bizarre fashions are repulsive to sensible people. Avoid them, unless you are in show business.

Dress appropriately for all situations and occasions. Choose conventional fashion, which are not drab and dull, but pleasant, visible and attractive. Set yourself apart from others with a dignified, distinctive, stable and independent style. The trick is to be slightly different from the crowd, and yet not radically different! Be conservative yet up-to-date; you conform but you stand out! How you wear your clothes is as important as what you wear, if the clothes do not fit you, you are bound to look awkward. Be selective, because your apparel tells a lot about you. Always present yourself as someone intelligent, educated and successful. The choices of colours, texture, patterns, cuts, shapes, sizes, lengths, fittings, accessories, belts, socks and shoes are all important and should match among themselves as well as the circumstances in which they are worn.

Of all the things that we wear, perhaps our expression is the most important, and the smile is the facelift that is sure to improve our appearance. It takes about 20 muscles to smile and 60 muscles to frown. Why not make it easy on yourself! Exude enthusiasm. Sometimes a smile happens in a flash, but its memory can last a lifetime. Be expressive and articulate in a natural way, because If you strive too hard to look and act great it will show! Your social interaction counts greatly. Always maintain a calm, steady and warm-hearted gaze, and offer firm handshakes. Don't be just a rough diamond; the sincere smile and the twinkle in the eyes cost nothing but they always break the ice and work wonders.

Command a pleasant and expressive voice with the right pitch and volume. You can further train your voice by reading, or playbacks of your recorded speech. It is safer to limit your hand and body gestures to a few simple and effective ones, without being carried away. Your standard of etiquette and courtesy must be AAA, and yet never deliberate or artificial. You will be punctual for all appointments, remember names and faces, and talk in a considerate and responsible way. You see, all these social skills are so important that as a result, the best teacher need not be the most learned, the hardest-working salesman is not necessary the best, and the smartest worker is not always the most valuable! In

other words, social skills can take the place of substantial knowledge and hard work.

As you grow up and advance in your career, your attire, trappings and surrounding must match or even precede your level of success. Likewise, your business or the company you work for, must invest in an impressive corporate image that projects quality, strength, stability and progress. A catchy and attractive name and emblem helps; look at all those nice airline logos. In climbing the social and corporate ladder, you will show excellent taste, choice, intelligence and affluence, in yourself, your environment and the people you associate with. You will for example, put your certificates in a serious and respectable folder, not a tattered envelope, when you go for a job interview. I would never, for instance, wear a coloured shirt with a frail or freaky tie, and several plastic pens in my pocket, I would look like a road-side magician or a book-keeping clerk! I wouldn't carry a big salesman's briefcase either. Nothing succeeds like the look of success!

You should steadily reward and adorn yourself along the way. Pamper yourself with symbols of success: Good watches, leather shoes and bags, and later, an impressive office, a beautiful house, coupled with an automatic fuel-injected car in the luxurious category! They all add to your image of achievement and stability, and can propel you to dizzying heights.

When you attain a position of top management and leadership, you should take an office in the deeper and more private end of the building. You will be extremely knowledgeable and eloquent, with the upright stance, confident gaze, purposeful movements and relaxed expressions that mark you out as the person in control. You will make your environment more conducive to thinking, planning, creativity and top performance.

I will end this essay with the vital message: All through your life, you must strive to be the kind of person whose arrival can **light up a room and enrich the people and things in it.**

"Corporate identity is the modern company's single most powerful management resource. And communicating its identity to everyone not just its customers - is a company's first priority." - Wally Olins.

"In our highly competitive society, people like to deal with successful people because they feel these people must be good at what they do...it is essential that you buy first class, professional tools.." - R. L. Shook.

"Body image is part of self-image. It can affect a person's self-confidence and what he does and does not do in life." - Dr J. Comer.

"A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks." - C. Gordy.

"Teenager to friend: My mother gained weight because of shame. It's a shame to throw this out; it's a shame to throw that out." - L. Lozanoff.

"The best effects of fine persons is felt after we have left their presence." - R. W. Emerson.

"Cheerfulness is the atmosphere under which all things thrive." - J. P. Richter.

"Why not be oneself? That is the whole secret of a successful appearance." - Edith Sitwell.

"Look sharp, feel sharp, be sharp! Take that advice and I'll see you at the top!" - Zig Ziglar.

"You may make every effort to dress in perfect style - but it will all be wasted unless you wear a smile." - P. Strong.

"I cannot help forming some opinion of a man's sense and character from his dress; and I believe most people do.." - Lord Chesterfield.

## Chapter 22 The Joy of Learning and the Power of Knowledge.

Every piece of information is a joy to me. Since childhood, I have been engrossed in almanacs, birds and orchids, Guinness books of records, and Jane's Directories of battleships and aircrafts. I am still spellbound by Uri Geller's ability to bend nails with mind power; our white blood cells' battle with germs as seen under a microscope; my recent marvel at the view of the earth as shot from the space shuttle and reproduced on a giant cinema screen. My children are still thrilled by such things as births in an aquarium and lightning in a glass at science exhibitions. I am sure that you delight in learning and discovery too. For me, it is heartening to see the rate my children are gobbling up the local libraries!

There is no saturation point for knowledge, its fruits are sweet, it enables us to move around and ahead in the world, it enriches our lives. Through learning we let the universe unfold to us and we experience its endless wonders. There are intrigues and beauties everywhere. All of life should be a learning process. We boost our worth and abilities by finding out more about the world, then acquiring the know-how to fulfil people's needs. Things can go missing, health can fail, but what we have invested in our minds are ours forever; nobody can take them away. Short-change our education now and we may be short of change for life!

While we are taught many things of practical values in school, our interest in reading and learning brings joy, and will have an enormous influence on us throughout our lives. As my children are finishing off the libraries, we are setting up our own library in the house, with encyclopaedias, books on plants, animals, birds, butterflies, geography, self-improvements, interpersonal skills, happy living and all the food for our minds. These will be our mighty foundation for knowledge, mental development and the acquisition of skills, riches, and fulfilling lives. The love for knowledge is one of life's noblest pleasures, it is a fun-filled and valuable learning process reinforced by reading, inquisitiveness and reflection. Reading must lead to fertile thinking, questioning, knowledge accumulation and eventual accomplishment, otherwise it is just a fruitless pastime. We must take notes of good facts and ideas for long-term use. Our choice of books is also important.

Interesting to note, I stopped reading novels years ago. I find that apart from

providing diversion, relaxation and a good vocabulary, fiction gives less education. Much intrigue and passion were conjured up in the minds of writers, they are not real and not always applicable to our daily lives. It is the non-fiction that gives us useful information and technology. On the whole, education expands our horizon, and develops our intellectual, moral, spiritual and even physical well-being. When we have enough knowledge at our disposal, we can improve our health, performance, our social and family relationships, our lives and our world!

In contrast, ignorance is a sad state of affairs. In the long run, it is more expensive than education! If you grow up knowing nothing about this and that, it begins to show quickly and people may avoid dealing with you and even desert you. That is just the tip of the iceberg, how are you going to find your way and exert the knowledge and skills to earn a good living? You will be lost! The unformed person lives in a dark world. Wise people like the great Plato put it less mildly: 'Better be unborn than untaught, for ignorance is the root of misfortune.' Shakespeare wrote: 'The common curse of mankind is folly and ignorance.' Reason carefully, isn't ignorance the root of fear, poverty, envy, violence and suffering among millions? People lost the way to love, to thrive and to live fully. After all nothing happens accidentally, everything has its **cause and effect**. If people lack the knowledge and capacity to grow a good crop, run a business, make something sellable, or the skills to get along with colleagues, partners and mates, they will miss a decent livelihood. The unfortunate few even turned to crime and warfare. Hence, in the short time we are given (about 75 years), it is our duty to learn as much as possible and do our best, then the **effects** and consequences will take care of themselves. Otherwise, we would leave this world sadly, without ever discovering and using the great potential within us.

A strong and solid educational background is vital regardless of the type of career a person chooses. No one should take schooling lightly. In my years of experience as a student and teacher, I could see that it is the best students who have the greatest fun in school. They enjoy their work and achieve what we term the 'Flow'. Conversely, it is the least enthusiastic and productive people who are the most unhappy. The lazy and lethargic only enlarge their boredom and feelings of inadequacy and frustrations.

Our education should not end with university graduation, because our development should be an endless process. Furthermore, modern technologies are

moving at a crazy pace, and are quick to leave us behind. We must therefore stay progressive, and live in a state of curiosity and adventure to prolong our zeal for learning. I always maintain that any day, any minute, any one can find something to learn, and to improve on. We should strive to train and use the whole of ourselves. Reading is of course not the only source of knowledge, you have to observe, analyse, and listen to others. Everyone you associate with is a teacher in some ways. Emulating experts and successful people is also an effective way of gaining knowledge, productive habits, and eventual success!

Some experts emphasise the value of a general universal education; others stress the importance of specialised knowledge. I think we should have both. All-round knowledge brings us more complete and fulfilling lives, while special skills earn us the high incomes! Liberal education develops a sense of balance, duty and honour. Apart from his love of the world and its beauty, the man of liberal arts and jack-of-all-trades has wider visions and capabilities. He is a multi-dimensional person. He can tackle the complexities of modern businesses. He is not confined to a specific area; being fluid and mobile, he has fewer dead ends. With his vast knowledge of himself, his job, people, associates, markets and industry, he can be the overall master of his business. He is not shut from the rest of the world, he can stand back and look at the whole picture, foresee developments, seize opportunities, and forestall problems. His general knowledge, anticipation and problem-solving skills will propel him to the top swiftly, and keep him there.

When you have acquired good all-round knowledge, it is time to pursue a specialised field in a rapid-growth industry, where I can assure you, you will be rewarded generously. This is where your hobbies and interests should be, and where your knowledge and resources with their winning edge are focused on a lucrative goal. The great Francis Bacon said, 'Knowledge is power.' But it is power only when you have set goals and channelled all your energy towards your targets, be it entertainment, zoology or medicine. I suggest you start from where you are, with what you have, and put in your whole heart and soul. If you hang in there, cultivate your special knowledge and skills with practice and hard work, your harvest may one day exceed your wildest dreams! Look at Steven Spielberg, Honda, Ray Kroc and Disney. Their desire to know everything in their special field became obsession and almost madness. McDonald's Ray Kroc scrutinised and improved his burgers and fries exhaustively, until perfection! Spielberg was

engrossed in every aspect of movie production, leaving nothing to chance. Look at his array of gigantic movies and successes!

The biggest room in the world is the one for improvement. Keep learning. You are as much as you know; with versatile education, special knowledge and the resultant wisdom, you can do anything! You are on course to relish all of life's true riches, and I will guide you in my next 78 chapters - they will be part of your great learning process too!

"You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them." - R. Bradbury.

"Every man who knows how to read has in his power to magnify himself, to multiply the ways in which he exists, to make his life full, significant, and interesting." - Aldous Huxley.

"The larger the island of knowledge, the longer the shoreline of wonder." - Anonymous.

"Poverty is no disgrace, but ignorance is." - Anonymous.

"Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed somewhere by someone." - Anonymous.

"Money is what fuelled the industrial society. But in the informational society, the fuel, the power, is knowledge." - J. Galbraith.

"Anyone who keeps on learning not only remains young but also becomes constantly more valuable." - Harvey Ullman.



## Chapter 23 Staying Ahead.

We talked about knowledge, now it is time to be as knowledgeable as anyone else, and I will tell you why. If I had to type this book on a typewriter, I would still be on my 7th Chapter, and they would look awful, with eraser marks and Twink smears all over! Fortunately, this computer-wizard can clean the page, swap paragraphs or straighten my spelling in a flash! It is fun. Likewise, if banks and airlines had to revert from computers to abacus, they would have closed their doors within days. Through automation (machinery, computers and robots), the world has achieved more productivity and growth in the last 100 years than it did in the last 500! You see how important it is to be knowledgeable, to keep up with the arts and sciences, with the world and its technology.

Change is as sure as sunrise and sunset. Nowadays we need to move and grow quickly, to hang on to the edge of fast-evolving and ever-changing economies and technologies. The vast global market of products and services are advancing so rapidly, that the things that satisfied people's tastes 5 years ago are now obsolete. Humans are a lot better than machines which soon become outdated because they are unable to change. My record player has gone into the attic, we can hardly keep up with the new video-cameras and karaoke-sets that pour into the market. If you do not keep up with everything, you are likely to wake up one morning and find many friends ahead of you, in one way or another. In life, if you are slow and you cannot be the early birds, you cannot expect to get nice worms and may have to put up with spiky caterpillars or centipedes! There are many interesting books and magazines in the library, and I strongly recommend you to read magazines like *Discover*, *Popular Science* and *Science Digest*.

Edward Gibbon wrote, 'All that is human must retrograde if it does not advance.' I could not agree more with him. Even the most sparkling water will go stale if it is kept still; the mosquito soon comes to lay its eggs. Look at the might of moving waters, carving out Grand Canyons, and turning boulders into pebbles all over this planet. As I said in the last chapter, learning should be a never-ending process. There are always things we can do a little better each day, and old ways we can modernise regularly.

This habit of constant advancement is found in great people throughout

history. Archimedes, Louis Pasteur, Edison, Einstein and many others have achieved fame and fortune by being a step ahead of their peers, in thoughts, imagination, and creation of products and services that delighted millions. Think of the people who came up with Coca Cola, Rubik's Cube, computer games, karaoke and laser discs, and now the marvellous hair-like fibre-optics, which can transmit telephone, radio, computer and TV, 4 things in one go! I read of milk-bottles made in the shape of donuts for better grip, of newer and better computer programmes being designed, of deserted old buildings being turned into cosy homes for the aged. Last week, I read about a company that pioneered the breeding of the beautiful golden Arowana fish in Indonesian Borneo. Now 5,000 fishes worth US\$4 million are exported to Japan yearly! It is fun to be the early birds, ahead of the pack. A glaring example is Mr Tiger Woods. At 21, he was the youngest champion ever, to win the U.S. Golf Masters' Tournament. He was taught golf by his father before he started walking, and he was aspiring to win the Masters at the age of five!

In today's progressive markets, wealth is further multiplied by the powerful mass media and distribution systems. You can send your wonder-products to millions to enrich their lives, and you prosper exponentially. In olden days, you had to be born a prince to be a king. Nowadays, anyone in blue jeans (like Bill Gates of Microsoft) can live like a king if he can make a product that can influence the world; if he can think, move ahead and reach the masses with knowledge and creativity, aided by information and communication systems which are now formidable. Many self-made millionaires could smell opportunities, and satisfy people's needs. They had the wisdom and vision to anticipate oncoming trends and to make adaptations and innovations that led to success. They did not just make better hamburgers or mousetraps; they could connect various skills and products in a **new way**. If you are doing things this year the same way you did them last year, you are behind the times!

Besides keeping abreast of changes, **staying ahead** is even more important. The world's top 20 tennis champions and top 20 golf masters are millionaires. So is Ben Johnson, the fastest man in the world who ran 100 metres in 9.8 seconds. If you need 10.8 seconds, forget it, run a fitness club or a sports shop instead. Likewise my ex-classmate who earns US\$250,000 in salary a year need not have to be 6 times better than me! If you could only stretch yourself a little to gain that

**winning edge**, that margin is small, but the rewards are big.

Handsome rewards are awaiting, and when you have graduated from college and you are ready to wield your talents, knowledge and skills, there are thousands of opportunities in many fields. There, you can innovate and excel, and you will look at everything with new eyes - eyes of imagination and creation! By then, jobs will be radically different, many will be defunct. The following are just a few to tickle your fancies, I am sure you can invent and improve in these areas: Hotels and catering, electronics and computers, consultancy and counselling, design and fashion, music and entertainment, flowers and decoration, health and sports, personal care and medicine, communication and mass media, sales and marketing, smart tools and new products, travel and tourism, and not forgetting my children's favourite - pets and wild life. This lesson is short but the message is strong: Stay ahead.

"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often." - Sir Winston Churchill.

"And there are opportunities everywhere for creating new business, even entire new industries, and for building and expanding old ones." - J. P. Getty.

"If you want to succeed, you have to forge new paths and avoid borrowed ones that promise success." - John Rockefeller.

"There is less and less chance for the square peg to squeeze himself into the round hole under today's complex and fast-moving conditions." - J. P. Getty.

"The man who is above his business may one day find his business above him." - Daniel Drew.

## Chapter 24 The Marvel of Man's Inventions.

In the last essay, I suggested that you should be inventing things someday. Now let us admire what man has created through the ages. In 1976, I visited the pyramids in Egypt. They consist of thousands of blocks of stones, each the size of your classroom, lifted and piled up neatly to form the perfect pyramidal shape! This is incredible. They were built a few thousand years ago, long before the arrival of cranes and tractors, and it would take about 500 men to lift each block of stone. The pyramid remains one of the wonders of the world.

Several people who contemplated flying in olden days were considered insane. Then in 1903, the first plane built by the Wright brothers flew for 12 ecstatic seconds, reaching the height of a car-garage. Now, merely 90 years later, the latest Boeing 747 400-series airliner can fly 11,000 km for 13 hours at 11,000 metres! 400 passengers in an aircraft of 350 tonnes are lifted effortlessly into the air. Some modern jet fighters can whisk across at 3,000 km per hour, almost 3 times the speed of sound. Fastness is achieved on land too, the rapid magnetic-levitation trains, which can match the swiftness of small planes are now being tested. Magnetic systems allow the train to 'fly' a little above the track without the drag of touch and friction.

In 1817, a German called B. Drais connected 2 wheels with a wooden bar, to make the first bicycle. The rider had to propel himself by kicking the ground! The first automobile did not even look remotely like a car, neither did it have the smoothness and speed of the latest Lexus or Jaguar. Nowadays, the air-bag in a luxury car is activated in a fraction of a second to cushion you in a collision, such things were beyond the imagination of our forefathers. G. Daimler made the first petrol-powered car; he was one of the founders of the Daimler-Benz Company that makes Mercedes cars (named after a daughter of one of the founders).

The computer has only been around for some 40 years. Now the super computer can do 250,000,000 calculations in a second! The ordinary diskette we use can carry all the words in a book, while the hard disc can store the entire set of encyclopaedias! Isn't science amazing? I cannot wait to see what we will have in 20 years' time. The TV reached the public in the U.K. in 1936, and the first coloured ones emerged in the U.S. in 1956. Now the satellite in space can 'collect

and cast' live TV shows instantly around the globe, to be enjoyed by millions. At home, the laser 'shines' on the discs to give you splendid music and movies, and it is used further to perform surgery in hospitals, replacing the awkward and scary surgical knives.

Science is also rapidly filling up our houses with gadgets which are embarrassingly smarter than we are. Look at the microwave and all the remote-control electronics. In the coming decade, micro-machines will sound an alarm when there is pollution, or when little Tom falls into the swimming pool. Lights, air conditioners or heaters will come on at the wave of your finger. A few robots will scurry around to fill your bathtub, and warm your TV dinner for you. Elsewhere in earthquake-prone areas, micro sensors could detect an impending quake and quickly disconnect all your electricity, water and gas, to prevent damage and injury. The time will come, when you will hardly need to drive your car or mow the lawn!

All these big inventions and wonders of science may appear formidable, or beyond the grasp of young minds, but if you spend years studying computer or laser technology, and gradually take them apart, the complexity will soon disappear. All great scientific products had rather simple beginnings, boosted by gradual improvements over the years, and coupled with occasional surprises and discoveries that enhanced their powers and sophistication. All these developments strengthen our conviction that **nothing is beyond us**, nothing is beyond powerful human enthusiasm and inquisitiveness.

Those of us who aspire to be creative, productive and successful, must therefore appreciate all the inventions over the years, including all the ordinary everyday things. New ideas and better products continue to evolve from these things. These small and common items also provide better relevance and attainability for young people. Corn flakes for example, were invented quite accidentally years ago, by the Kellogg brothers. Matches first appeared in 1927. Before that, pellet matches were exploded by a hammering device! Pencil first started with liquid lead, and in olden days, the pen had to be dipped in ink. Then came the fountain pen, and in 1937, L. Biro patented the first ball-point pen. Isn't it cute? A tiny ball at the tip of the pen, rolling along with a reservoir of ink behind it! The combination lock on your bicycle may look simple, but 25 numbers in 3 turns offer thousands of different combinations!

The history of inventions teaches us to constantly find fascination, and foster imagination in things around us. Motion pictures for example, started because of people's interest in animal movements. Then they discovered that when 40 or 50 pictures were run quickly on the screen, they merged to give a live picture; hence, the birth of movies! Cartoons were initiated by artists, and entered the screen after the arrival of motion pictures. In early days, messages were signalled by fire, or gestured from high towers! Then electricity was used to communicate, using 26 wires for 26 alphabets. Samuel Morse invented the Morse code, and in 1838, he needed only one wire instead of 26, to signal the codes. The telephone, however, evolved through trials and perseverance. In 1875, Alexander Bell found that the steel rod, while vibrating over the magnet of a telegraphic machine, caused a current of varying strength to flow through the wire. Many great products had crude and humble beginnings, others had accidental births.

All our inventions are increasingly shaping and colouring our lives. By thinking big and thinking small, and with fertile imagination and advancing technology, scientists and even dreamers are expanding and enriching our future. An exciting universe awaits us. Now play your part with creativity and calibre, and join humanity's concerted efforts to build a better world.

"You see how things are, and you ask 'Why?' But I dream of things that do not exist, and I ask 'Why not?'" - George Bernard Shaw.

"Without this playing with fantasy no creative work has yet come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of imagination is incalculable." - Jung.

"We all have creativity, but very few know how to use it." - Akio Morita.

## Chapter 25 The Consciousness for Abundance and Prosperity.

Have you ever wondered why some people remained poor all their lives? The answer is: They dreamed of nothing, saw no possibility of finding anything, and ended up with nothing. Numerous people remain in their low-paid jobs for most of their lives and appear likely to remain that way. There are many with an awareness no richer than that of a church-mouse. Their poverty consciousness is truly stifling and crippling. They see no tunnel, let alone the light at the end of it. Some Asian taxi-drivers who spend most of the days napping in their cars, waiting for passengers, are in danger of approaching this paupers' camp. I often thought, if I were one of them, I would have read law books and got a law degree in 10 years. Several people have earned their degrees in jail, believe me.

Like most other things in life, poverty started first in the mind; a mind oblivious of all our **internal potentials** and **external possibilities**. This mentality grew out of sheer ignorance of our splendid powers, and is often self-imposed. It puts a freeze on many things, creating a very sad situation. The poverty-stricken ones are blinded slaves, toiling under the hardship and darkness of life. They remain poor, if they remain unaware of their inner and outer resources, of God-given bounties and lavishness in the world.

When you say things like: 'There's no chance...it's so competitive...it's really difficult...There's not enough to go around...' Watch out! Poverty consciousness is creeping into you. We know well that whatever is created in the mind becomes reality, so we must first conquer mental poverty before we can change external conditions. Intelligence, knowledge, thinking process, wisdom, discoveries of ourselves and our abilities, and using resources in the right directions, etc, are all vital. If you have nothing but an eye for scarcity, your financial future is doomed.

Let us run out of the little mouse-hole, leave this barren plot, and jump over the fence into a land of plenty! We have seen the wonder in nature, the limitless flora, fauna and minerals, the countless hobbies and career paths; we have learned to find good everywhere. We are now poised to clinch all the opulence around us, and we can do it most naturally. There is abundance for all of us if we open our

eyes, minds and hearts to it. We are then more inclined to see opportunities and to capitalise on them. Powerful ideas exist in our minds, even though they are invisible. The potency of these thoughts is phenomena; they can rule the world!

It is vital that we constantly fill our minds with feelings of plenty and prosperity. Your subconscious mind is like a bank account, it grows with whatever you put into it. Let the feeling of riches well up and swell up within you, then you become compatible with wealth, and with wealthy people too. All successful people are deeply convinced in their subconscious that they are worth millions. Keep your mind focused on abundance, seeing and counting your blessing wherever you go, and I can assure you, fortune will develop and unfold around you. Your thoughts are magnetic and magical, someday you will be amazed by their results. Even from a practical standpoint, if you always wake up with expectation of plenty, you have made a good start. You are more enthusiastic and vibrant, your work is easier, and your actions follow your dreams. These dispositions invariably help you along the road to success. Can you dispute that?

Fifty years ago there were 10,000 millionaires in the U.S. Now there are over 600,000 of them, an increase of 60 times when the population only doubled! For every baby born, 60 people had grown into a millionaire! Besides, every year some 750,000 new businesses opened up in U.S. alone. Jobs, opportunities, and profits are everywhere. With the support of science and technology, wealth is multiplying at an accelerated rate.

Look at Malaysia on the map, it is a little bigger than New Zealand, but it is now producing 650,000 barrels of oil a day, worth US\$10 million! Timber production is US\$5 million daily, and is now managed for perpetual yield. Gas production is also in millions of dollars everyday, and there are still 76 trillion cubic feet of gas reserve in the country! Even in the neighbouring countries of Australia and Indonesia, timber, minerals, crops, fisheries, oil and gas abound. This is only a part of the big earth. Looking at all these, should you be contented with being just a drain-digger? Even in the most isolated corners of the globe, you will see Eskimos catching fat seafood through the ice, and Aborigines spearing fishes for dinner.

For your well-being and your bright future, Please embrace and believe deeply in the following points:



1. This is a lavish and bountiful universe, with diverse and endless opportunities everywhere.
2. Life is full of fun and fortune when I have a positive outlook and a go-getting and adventurous nature.
3. It is my divine right to be successful, my duty to enrich myself and others. My success helps people, my failure helps no one.

A Chinese proverb says, 'With money, a dragon; without it, a worm.' So go on, discover and nurse the vast wealth in your mind, then release it. This, coupled with profuse opportunities in the world, and your formidable knowledge, talents, interpersonal and practical skills, you will go like an unstoppable train, and lead the race. Remember always: Think poor and you stay poor, think wealthy and you grow wealthy.

"We find only the world we look for." - Thoreau.

"When big money begins to come it comes so quickly and in such large amounts that you wonder where it was hiding during those lean years." - Napoleon Hill.

"The only advantage of being poor is that it doesn't cost much, and the salesmen leave you alone." - Anonymous.

"God never meant man to be a purely spiritual creature, He likes matter. He invented it." - C. S. Lewis.

"I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." - Jesus Christ.

"Ask and ye shall receive. Knock and the door will be opened." - The Bible.

"The person who asks for little deserves nothing." - Mexican proverb.

## Chapter 26 Wealth for a Purposeful and Fulfilling Life.

It is often said that money is not everything, but have you ever tried living without it? You may have to go back 1,000 years, to the days of hunting and fishing. The truth is, if you are poor you have more or less failed as a human being, and the birds and bees have outmatched you! Besides, when you are penniless, you cannot help others and crown your life with a noble purpose. You may even be some kind of burden or parasite to your family and friends. Boileau wrote, 'Money gives an appearance of beauty even to ugliness; but everything becomes frightful with poverty.' Wealth, on the other hand, attracts more wealth, and nothing succeeds like success. The more luxuries you have, the more you can pamper yourself, your loved ones and others towards greater success. You help others indirectly, through the money you spend, creating demand, jobs and profits. Things multiply, as mentioned in Chapter 16, you prosper further when you add to prosperity.

I must clarify however, that money is not the only asset. It only provides part of our needs. There are mental and spiritual resources, moral and character riches, which lead to contentment, peace and happiness. B. Tapie, the French industrialist said, 'Lack of money is a cruel deprivation, while, past a certain point, an excess of money means nothing.' Money is only needed up to a saturation point, beyond that it should go towards helping others. Life is only a brief passage of some 70 years, so you must enjoy it to the fullest, and do your best to improve your life and the world.

You must first strengthen yourself, before you can empower others. When you have achieved success, you can have all the facilities, freedom, fun, friendships, feasts, and all your favourite things. You can have the best house, car and boat, and enjoy the great outdoors and frequent holidays with your family and move first class. Your home will be filled with flowers, books, magazines, hi-fis, laser-discs, pianos, electronic keyboards, aquariums, a swimming pool, a gym, a little zoo in the garden, and all the things you fancy. You will control millions of dollars of business. You will be robust, radiant, healthy and contented. You can then work towards bringing good to others, and life would be truly meaningful. I visualise my charitable foundation, which amasses and allocates funds for the poor and homeless. There will be revival and motivation for the weak; learning and

training for the underprivileged. Let us all work towards that goal. Wealth is wonderful, a great blessing; it adds to comfort, enjoyment and freedom. It provides gifts for us to give away, it is magical. Let's not have wealth with waste, or money without meaning, or prosperity without purpose!

Since ancient times, various religions have stressed the importance of the 'tithing money'. This refers to the 10% of our earnings, meant for God, the church and society. It is believed that in doing charity, what we get will be more than what we give, and the response will be better than the action. In the process, we foster generosity and love - the most divine virtues. We should always do these things because we genuinely want to make others happy, not because we want anything in return.

Those who have not learned the noble gesture of sharing are missing something, because true happiness becomes complete only with the act of giving. Furthermore, by sharing our wealth, we tend to make others stronger and more productive, consequently wealth multiplies, and we are bound to gain in return. Even if we do not, does it matter? We already have ample riches, would we rather have our surplus resources idling and decaying away?

Roy Rogers, the American millionaire film star and philanthropist constantly thanked God for his bounties. He was generous to everyone, especially children. He said, 'The big reason for my success is that the kids remember me in their prayers.' Andrew Carnegie, the great American industrialist, also donated much of his vast fortune in the early 1900s. He commented, 'I acquired my money through the efforts of other people, I shall give it back to the people as fast as I can...' These days, many movie and sports stars, prominent musicians, models and entrepreneurs are giving gifts and money to the needy; they include Celine Dion, Oprah, and Whitney with her Whitney Houston Foundation and scores of others. This blossoming trend of 'doing things for others' is wonderful. After all, the rich have so much to spare, while the poor could do with some amenities. We would have lots of Christmas days on earth.

I could not agree more with G. A. Orndorff when he said, 'No one can become rich without enriching others. Anyone who adds to prosperity must prosper in return.' Nobody can truly reach a high degree of enduring success without love, respect and co-operation from others, and without helping his fellowmen. Let us all enjoy wealth and in return, make our lives worthwhile by

giving something of value to society. How could we settle for anything less than success? Our prosperity will benefit our loved ones and numerous people; our poverty will help no one. Success is our perpetual duty because there are always others needing our assistance. Now let us move on, and make the most of our lives - the most precious things in existence.

"I've been rich and I've been poor. Believe me, rich is better." - Sophie Tucker.

"Those who pretend that money isn't everything in life are usually broke." - Malcolm Forbes.

"Whatever you give comes back to you." - Estee Lauder.

"Our success in life depends entirely upon what we do on this earth for our fellowman." - Price Daniel.

"Put giving first and getting takes care of itself. The generous prosper. The selfish don't." - Anonymous.

"He that does good to another does also good to himself; not only in the consequence, but in the very act of doing it; for the consciousness of well-doing is an ample reward." - Seneca.

"Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves." - J. M. Barrie.

"God doesn't look at how much we do, but with how much love we do it." - Mother Teresa, India's great relief worker.

## Chapter 27 Dreams.

If Bell, Edison, Disney and the Wright brothers never had dreams, we probably wouldn't have phones, TVs, Disneylands and aeroplanes. Had Spielberg been dull and complacent, we wouldn't have the great thrill of Jaws, ET and Jurassic Park either. Walt Disney said, 'If you can dream it, you can do it.' You will learn in the days ahead that many great things on earth started with an idea. Most great men were so focused on their dreams that they bulldozed through hardship and impossible odds to reach prominence. Edison failed 700 times while inventing the light bulb. Abraham Lincoln trudged 27 years of defeats, before he reached the U.S. presidency. Mr Mandela carried his wish through 20 years of imprisonment, he is now the President of South Africa and a distinguished world figure. Years ago, Mr Conrad Hilton sat in his little motel in Cisco, Texas, with a picture of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel behind him. He dreamed of being successful enough one day, to buy the hotel as a gift for his Mum. Later, he made his dream come true! Today, many Hilton hotels stand elegantly around the globe. Irvine Robbin, another great US entrepreneur said, 'Take any giant corporation, ...they were all started by one person who had a good idea and knew how to exploit it.' There are hundreds of examples. Dreamers have truly changed and enriched our lives. Where there is dream, there is new direction, new creations, impressive achievement and great human progress.

Believe me, many fantasies can materialise if enough enthusiasm and persistence work on them. W. Bernbach commented, 'An idea can turn to dust or magic, depending on the talent that rubs against it.' The world's history of inventions and accomplishments has proven this too well. Carl Sandburg said, 'Nothing happens unless first a dream.' Dreams have in themselves many advantages, the following are some of them:

1. Dreams are the starting points of achievements, even great ones.
2. They widen our horizon, open up frontiers and opportunities.
3. Dreams trigger our goals, plans, actions and accomplishments.
4. They bring happiness in enthusiasm, hope and anticipation.
5. Dreams create wonderful products, inventions, circumstances.

6. They kill boredom, boost our feelings of worth and competence.

If you have no dreams, you become dull and uncreative. Firstly, you may have a habit of accepting mediocrity, never thinking of achieving anything exciting or outstanding. Secondly, you may have a low self-esteem, putting limits on what you can do. Thirdly, you may be dwelling too much on stale and stifling circumstances, paralysing a free and lively mind. Get out of these negative situations quickly! Start dreaming now, and change your future by beginning today!

One of my dreams is to publish this book in many languages and to donate some of the proceeds - which may be substantial - to charity. Last week the Pope published a book which is expected to net over US\$20 million for charity! With my own objectives in mind, I cannot jump out of bed fast enough each morning!

It is time you start visualising your future. You can base your vision on what you desire and will enjoy doing. Career paths are multifarious. See yourself for example, running a very successful chain of shops dealing in pets, stamps, coins, antiques and various hobbies. Or imagine yourself making fascinating films of chimps, owls, birds of paradise, rare animals and endangered species, while the work takes you all over the world. Your movies have extended exposures and slow motion, showing the butterfly gradually stretching from its pupae shell, and the hummingbird sipping nectar! A few of you could make a fortune in music, songs, dances or aerobic; others would earn US\$200 an hour as part time models.

Visualise yourself entering your cars in the morning, then sink into the leather seats surrounded by superb hi-fi music. You have many fun-filled holidays a year, to all the corners of the globe, including the Galapagos, the Amazon, the Yellowstone Park, the midnight sun, Tahiti and Disneyland. The Grand Canyon, the safaris in Africa, and the land of *The Sound of Music* will be added to your conquests. You visit cities and shop till you drop! One day you are sipping liqueur, and tasting the giant freshwater prawns at the Bangkok Oriental - often voted the world's best hotel. Another day, you are in your cosy sofas, enjoying your mammoth collections of National Geographic and Reader's Digest. Occasionally, you savour your Steinway & Sons grand piano with *The Blue Danube*. Then there is the magical Roland synthesiser, or another keyboard that can rival James Last's Orchestra! Friends come regularly for splendid karaoke songs, and marvellous music from your \$20,000 hi-fi set. On lazy Sundays, you dip in your pool, then

emerge to nibble barbecues and lobsters. Then there is your Garden of Eden, full of blossoms. You ride ponies, hand-feed the fish, birds, lizards, chimps, mousedeads and butterflies!

I can see my family and friends helping at the charitable foundation, generating funds to help the dejected and distressed, providing counselling for the troubled, and learning and motivational classes for idle youths... Keep dreaming. Your dreams will thrust you forward, all the way until your wishes come true. You are not wasting time planning lovely and noble things. Reach for the rainbow and the stars. The universe is unfolding and everyday is a new adventure. Hold on to your heart's desire, and don't be afraid to pray, to hope and wish. Cherish every vision that could make our world a better place. Remember however, that fantasy without action is only castle-building in the air, so you must plan and act, and do everything necessary to turn dreams into realities. Earl Nightingale, the great success teacher put it beautifully: 'Opportunity is invisible until we do something about it. A person's dream of what he wants one day to become is invisible. Yet, it is one of the most powerful forces on earth, responsible for all human progress.'

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." - Proverbs 29:18.

"All big men are dreamers." - Woodrow Wilson.

"All achievements, all earned riches, have their beginning in an idea!" - Napoleon Hill.

"If you don't have a dream, how are you gonna make a dream come true?" - Mary Martin, singing in the musical '*South Pacific*.'

"Dreams, risks and laughter - three words which I have always used to direct my life." - Bernard Tapie, French industrialist.

"My whole life has been about fulfilling dreams." - Estee Lauder.

## Chapter 28 Setting Your Goals.

Have you ever watched a dog chase its tail? Or a gold fish going round and round in the fish bowl? They spent much time and energy, getting nowhere. Many people are like that, wandering through life without any aspiration or mission. They are 3rd class humans, who have no dream or ideal. They drift along and have no real purpose for being alive. These reactive people do not make things happen, instead, they let things happen to them! So if you do not make plans to establish your destiny, the world and its circumstances will. Then you will have no control over your future, and little of life will yield to your heart's desire. You might as well be sleepwalking. Mark Twain prompted us, 'Plan your future because that's where you are going to spend the rest of your life.'

Isn't life funny? You become what you think about and get what you wish for. Life is not merely a game of chance, you can be excellent, mediocre or lousy, whichever you choose. People are not really useless, they just do not have enticing goals to inspire them. Many are simply lazy; others may be working hard but not working smart. In life, you need objectives and direction, otherwise you are barking up the wrong tree. Goals are a God-given instinct, even animals have them, and birds and insects migrate thousands of miles a year. Years ago, a group of scientists did experiments with moths. A male moth was released 6 kilometres away, but soon came tapping on the window of the female moth. I have read about hundreds of successful people; all of them had the ability to dream, to define purpose and objectives. They were single-minded, determined and often obsessed. Let me tell you the story of Lloyd Collier, as narrated by Napoleon Hill in his book *The Master Key to Riches*. He was born in North Carolina, USA. An illness in his teens paralysed him below the waist. Normally, one would have resorted to sitting in the mall waiting for charity, but he did not. He learned watch-repairing, and soon plied a successful trade with his confident, friendly and cheerful ways. His pre-set objectives, positive attitude, and daily affirmations eventually brought him the finest jewellery store and prettiest wife in town! He also owned a beautiful home and raised a happy family. All these, from a disabled man in a wheelchair!

Goals, like dreams, are wonderful, for the following reasons:



1. Goals are dreams alive with a purpose, they lead to achievement.
2. Knowing your destination and getting started is half the journey. You cannot hit the target if you don't have one.
3. When you set goals you have made a commitment to yourself and others, so you tend to fulfil them.
4. Your greater long-range goals will somewhat protect you from the frustrations of smaller short-term obstacles.
5. With your attention focused on your target, your concentration is powerful and unlikely to dissipate time and energy.
6. Purpose & anticipation enhance your enthusiasm and happiness.
7. Goals prepare the way for the concerted efforts and culmination of all your success ingredients and resources.
8. They allow you to assess and fine-tune yourself along the way.
9. A sense of direction triggers action, and eventual accomplishment. Your aims determine your thoughts, which in turn control your actions; your actions then mould your life.

You have hidden, God-given potentials that will never be realised unless you discover yourself, and allow your dreams to emerge and take expressions in your motives actions. Now that you know the importance of having ideals and objectives in life, it is time to set goals. The earlier you do it the better. You will be steps ahead of the pack; you will have the extra time to assemble your resources and perfect your skills. However, only you can decide your own aims in life. I can only show you the ropes, and here there are:

**Step 1:** Form a vision. Start with the end, and visualise the distinguished person you want to be, at say age 60. You are happy, vibrant, outstanding, prosperous, in love with life and contributing to society. Stretch as far as you can. Narrow goals create limited lives. Make an inventory of all your hopes, wishes and dreams.

**Step 2:** Write down a preliminary set of goals. If you don't write them down, forget it, because you'll surely forget them. Only written aspirations can bring commitments from yourself. Your first list may be quite a mouthful but it is okay. Be clear and specific, not wishy-washy.

**Step 3:** You evolve an improved and edited list over time, during which you

evaluate your talents, hobbies, heartstrings, availability of conducive environment and your ability to create them. Make your perfect setting for top performance. List the resources at your disposal, as well as the traits and personality you need to develop to be effective. Select and emulate successful models among people you know.

**Step 4:** Put your goals in ranking order of importance, and also in chronological order, specifying short, medium and long term targets. The terms can be 2 years, 10 years and 30 years respectively. Short term accomplishments are important because they all add up! The hours, days and weeks are so crucial, and will shape your destiny; besides, big achievements are easier when divided into small tasks.

**Step 5:** Modify your goals along the months and years, as your skills grow and values change, but never slack and stray from your main ambition. Keep your targets in sight, and set deadlines. I should have provided rows and columns for you to fill in your goals systematically. Anyway, write them down meticulously along the steps listed above.

**Step 6:** Formulate your strategies and action plans, as well as contingencies for problems, identify stumbling blocks. Then, **go!**

I have several points of caution for you. Firstly, goals are quite useless if they are unchallenging, not enjoyable, unrealistic and immeasurable. They must satisfy the senses. Secondly, do not set too many targets to disperse your focus and dissipate your energy; you will become a tired jack of all trades and a master of none. A few interlocking or related goals are best, with varying priorities. Thirdly, assess and reward yourself along the way, adjust and sharpen your attack. Fourthly, avoid all negative thoughts and influence on the journey. Lastly, and most important of all, remember always that beautiful thoughts without actions are as worthless as actions without thoughts! You must keep at it until you succeed. Cultivate courage, a positive attitude, determination and perseverance. Believe deeply that If you press ahead everyday, who can stop you? Your success will be a certainty. In the coming chapters, we will see many touching examples of marvellous rewards after numerous, and sometimes rather eye-popping failures along the way. Many failed, not realising that the darkest hour is just before dawn. Many men of great achievements admitted that if they had given up when they were most tempted to, they would have missed everything, and the magnificent payoff!

Let me end this lesson with a poem from Barbara Burrow:

*Hold on to your dreams as the years unfold  
Don't compromise the ideas that you hold  
For on history's pages are written the deeds  
Of those who had the courage to live by their creeds  
Who held to their dreams and at last achieved  
The lofty goals in which they believed.  
So be true to yourself in all that you do  
Reach for the stars and your dreams will come true.*

"Decide what you want, decide what you are willing to exchange for it. Establish your priorities and go to work!" - H. L. Hunt.

"This one step - Choosing a goal and sticking to it - changes everything." - Scott Reid.

"Better get a stiff neck for aiming too high than a hunch back for aiming too low."  
- Jacques Chancel.

"The beauty of starting out with the end - is that the goal itself will begin to define what it is you have to do to attain it." - H. Geneen, of AT & T.

"It is not enough to take steps that might one day lead to a goal; each step should, in itself, be a goal, and at the same time, carry us closer to the greater goal." - Goethe.

"When you reach out for the stars, you may not quite get one, but you won't come up with a handful of mud either." - Leo Burnett.

## Chapter 29 Burning Desire.

The economies of communist countries around the world have been stagnant and they have crumbled. Their workers got fixed wages regardless of their production or performance. The motivation there was not even lukewarm, let alone any passion for work. Compare communist North Korea, Cuba and East European countries with their laissez-faire counterparts and see the difference! Likewise, in Africa, Kenya and Tanzania now show great contrast after 30 years of independence. Kenyans have almost twice as many cars, telephones and TVs as the Tanzanians. Their towns are bustling with goods and services, which are lacking in Tanzania. The chief reason is that Kenya runs on a capitalist, free-market system, while its neighbour dragged along under a state-controlled, socialist economy. The key to economic success is: A craving for reward and a fiery urge to work for it.

The way to personal success is the same. Everywhere success abounds where it is flaring with aspirations. The joy in someone filled with an urge for conquest is unequalled. Nothing can stop a feverish achiever who is propelled by a lust for victory. If you deafen him, he will compose famous symphonies (Beethoven). If he is blind, he becomes a renowned poet (Milton), or a world-class singer (Feliciano, Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder). Imprison him, and he writes all the way to great fame (Solzhenitsyn), while another goes on to become the President of South Africa (Mandela). Abandoned, battered and abused, a girl turned into the best-paid celebrity in show business. She has a heart of gold and gives heaps to charity (Oprah). Detain him at a mental hospital, then he blesses mankind with the invention of radios and telephones (Marconi). Make him fail a thousand times, and on his next attempt he creates the first light bulb (Edison). Crush someone with a killer-disease, and he laughs his way to full recovery (N. Cousins). Take away his beautiful sweetheart, and he goes on to become a pop star, and marries a prettier girl (Billy Joel). Cripple him, and he soon gets the best jewellery shop and the loveliest wife in town (L. Collier). Other handicapped people run races and trot around the globe. These people resemble the traditional heroes who burned boats and bridges to reach victories. I could fill another page on people with glowing passion, but are you not convinced now, of the immense

power of burning desire?

Even among normal lives, thousands have started from scratch to build colossal fortunes through obsession, determination and hard work. Ford, for example, left his employers in 1899, determined never to take orders again. He later mass-produced the Ford cars that changed the American way of life. The foundation of every great discovery, invention or accomplishment was a desire or a dream. Without the childlike innocence of wishes and fantasies, few great achievements would have been made in history. Look at flying, spacecrafts, computers and lasers, and all the inventions. A burning desire knows no defeat, it can turn invisible wishes into real things. It just flies over hurdles, and gathers more momentum to reach the finishing line.

Picture to yourself all the marvellous things you would like to have, beautiful houses, cars, books, computers, musical instruments, all the pets you can cuddle in your Noah's Ark, and all the lovely insects, plants and flowers you can keep. Hobbies, great outdoors, hideaways, holidays around the world, and all the things that you can dream of. Visualise them as vividly as possible, the cosiness of your mansion, the smell of leather in your car. The brilliant tinkle of your black Steinway piano as you do Clayderman's '*Ballad Pour Adeline*'. 200 marine and fresh-water fishes frolic and flash among the greenery of your aquariums. The blazing blossom in the garden. The feel of the Papillon puppy in your hands, and the Dalmatian dog at your feet. A giggling hide-and-seek with your chimpanzee, as the white and red Japanese Kois glide around your pond. A tamed falconet hunts from your hand and an owl feeds in your palm, while the Fairy Blue bird thrives in your aviary.

Great skiing in the Swiss Alps; the sight of the 4 U.S. presidents carved on Mount Rushmore; a close-up enjoyment of Boyzone or the Spice Girls in concert. Mountains of wonderful gifts for orphanages, hospitals and slum-dwellers... Believe deeply that all these can be yours. Arouse a deep longing for them and become excited about them. Dwell on them constantly, and systematically plan and prepare to make all the sacrifices to achieve these dreams. Emotions of hope and expectation are generated and you are propelled steadily to your Utopia.

With continuous yearning and working towards your targets, the fruits will eventually appear and surround you. They can come sooner than you think! You only need to make up your mind now. Look at Kenny G, who just came up with

enchanting melodies on his saxophone, and made millions. The world is always waiting for someone like that; I wonder why many others did not show up earlier? There will be more Kenny Gs in future, on violin, on guitar, on electronic synthesiser or even Chinese instruments!

Life is an adventure, give it all you've got. Think of great enjoyment, and associate massive pleasures with purpose and persistence. Make changes now. Allow your fantasies of success to turn your craving into gold, your desire into diamond. Make plans, get excited and act now. Remember, situations will not develop on their own without your efforts. Improve your life by daring to live out your dreams, let them carry you away! Capitalise on an invigorating spiral where desire boosts performance and reward, and reward further fuels your enthusiasm. Believe fervently that your dreams will come true, and work yourself into white-hot passion, constantly advancing and saying everyday: 'Only great victory alone can quench my burning desire. Nothing short of triumph and success can stop me.' Then, the world is yours.

"Desire coupled with belief, mixed with persistence and expressed through action, make an unstoppable combination." - T. Edison.

"What you ardently and constantly desire, you always get." - Napoleon.

"As long as I have a want, I have reason for living." - B. Shaw.

"Only passion, great passion can elevate the human soul to achieve great things." - Denis Diderot.

"Do you know anyone who is zealous in their work? He is the equal of kings." - John Rockefeller.

"An integral part of being a star is having the will to win. All the champions have it." - Betty Cuthbert.

## Chapter 30 Imagination and Creativity.

Let me tell you a true story from Mr John Graham's book, *Letters From A Self-Made Merchant To His Son*. It is about Lazy Jim, who pestered Mr Graham for a job, and was eventually given one. His first duty was a tiring one, rolling heavy barrels from the warehouse to the railway. Soon he had nothing to do, and was recommended for a promotion! In his hardship, he had invented a belt that conveyed the barrels to the trains! Then he was made one of the better-paid time-keepers. Two months later, he was redundant again. He found a time-card punching machine to take over a few workers' job! Next, the task of copying out circular letters was assigned to him, but soon he spotted the newly-invented typewriter and persuaded Mr Graham to get one. This time, the boss had to raise his salary and send him out to get orders for their beef extract product. Later, tired after several fruitless trips, Jim suggested that they should make customers come in, instead of chasing around for them. He sent beef extract to people leaving on explorations and expeditions, and advertised on its food values and compatibility with various occasions. This scheme soon incurred losses. Eventually, Lazy Jim was about to lose his job, when orders started to pour in for their products! Then the sales multiplied, and he had to be given a highly-paid permanent job!

See? If you are creative and imaginative, you can be a little lazy and yet well-off! Norman V. Peale said, 'Imagination is the magic carpet.' You only need to watch MacGyver on TV to realise the fun and importance of creativity; sometimes, it can save lives. If there were more of him around, we would have more inventions. I am sure you have seen James Bond or a hero, resourcefully throw a live wire into the water to electrocute the thug. There was an incident in the U.S., where a burglary gang stole racks of clothing from stores in one quick sweep, before police could respond to alarm. A resourceful detective had the stores hook their cloth-hangers in irregular positions. This time the thieves got stuck and the police nabbed them! Long ago, in a fairy tale, a dying king was leaving all his possessions to his favourite person, Yusof the slave. His 3 sons were allowed to take one big item each. The first son chose the royal palace, the second clung to a chest of precious gems. The third son had more imagination, he picked Yusof!

Everywhere, creativity can solve problems and boost achievements. Has it ever occurred to you, that you can loosen many things by heating them? Or stiffen things by freezing them? Or improve others by moving, reshuffling, or increasing this or that? To give you some examples: A rocket would weigh 1 million tons to have enough fuel to reach the moon, so they made rockets in stages and jettisoned pieces along the way to ease the burden. A chemist's imagination and secret recipe created the world's most popular drink, the Coca Cola! Nowadays, vacuum cleaners outmatch the broom, solar power replaces batteries, washing machines relieve back-breaking housewives, remote microphones and guitars allow pop singers to dash across the stage without tripping over wires, and hairpins are made wave-like to cling better to your hair! Endless examples of creativity.

Einstein declared, 'Imagination is better than knowledge.' And Edison remarked: 'There is always a better way.' The power of imagination and creativity is the birthplace of human inventions and progress. It allows us to pursue untried methods, and better things. There are champions whose wealth mushroomed quickly from just a single brilliant idea. Remember Rubik's Cube? And recently a little table-top garden on a saw-dust face? Others needed time to gain acceptance; Whittle and von Ohain for example, invented the jet engine for aeroplanes but were ignored for years. Some movie-makers, song-writers and inventors had a tough time selling their ideas, yet they ended up with stunning success. Some top-selling songs were almost thrown into the rubbish initially! So the lesson is: Be patient, and keep at it.

Thousands of reports have surfaced from research on human faculties, and generally they concurred that creativity emerged in these avenues: 1. The creativity of necessity and frustration, where people pursued a better way, or a way out of their problems. 2. The creativity of childlike innocence and curiosity, like a child building on her Lego set! Besides, innocence is unrestrained by exact sciences and rigid knowledge. 3. The creativity of questioning and construction, where we ask questions, put ideas together, or improve on them. This is often termed: Synthetic Creativity. The following are tips on improving your imagination and creativity:

- 1. Take time off or Sleep on it.** Great composers and songwriters have maintained that the best pieces were written in the most unlikely places.
- 2. Take a fresh look, associate freely.** Connect ideas together and to things and



settings outside the context; rest to sharpen your saw.

**3. Practice and develop thinking**, plus fantasy, and passion for things.

**4. Keep Questioning.** This is the cradle of improvements and inventions. Ask limitless questions like: Can improvements come from discarding, lowering, heightening, reducing, increasing or mixing something? What about variations in materials, colours, weight, textures, hardness, duration, speed, timing, simplicity, intensity, complexity, quality? Can better image, designs, methods or machinery be used? Can comfort, convenience, relaxation, fun, mystery ingredients and psychological values be improved? What about morale, goodwill, productivity, time and cost saving, new technology, changing tastes and needs, and the future?

In concluding, my advice is: Don't think and act like sheep. Don't always accept the conventional way of doing things, find the best way. Your time is limited; your imagination is not. Enjoy the occasional flight of fancy. Your creativity will build a better future.

"I believe in imagination, what I cannot see is infinitely more important than what I can see." - Duane Michals.

"Many great ideas have been lost because the people who had them couldn't stand being laughed at." - Anonymous.

"If I had to define life in a word, it would be: Life is creation." - Claude Bernard.

"I have found that ideas come when you have a great desire to find them; the mind becomes a kind of watchtower...for any incident that might excite the imagination; music, a sunset, etc, can geminate an idea." - Charlie Chaplin.

"The majority... are incapable of having an original idea because they cannot free themselves from the restraints of logic." - Ogilvy.

## Chapter 31 Beliefs.

Now you are about to discover something that will empower you, and bring profound and lasting effects on your life. We will be seeing here and in the next 4 chapters, the amazing hidden powers inside us. This matter is giving me such excitement, it is sending goose pimples to my arms! In my experience, the mind's magic has astounded me enough. W. Clement Stone proclaimed: 'What the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve.' Experts everywhere are preaching: 'You are what you think.' If they are harping so much, you may say, there must be some truth in it? Believe me, there is enormous truth in it.

For hundreds of years, athletes have tried running a mile in less than 4 minutes, and failed. It was universally accepted as an impossible feat. Then Dr Bannister came along, believed in himself and trained hard to prove others wrong. Sure enough, he finally ran the mile under 4 minutes! Soon, hundreds of people did it. Now, a thousand runners have done it, and the 4-minute mile is history. What happened? One moment, nobody in the whole world could do it, another moment, hundreds can do it. Has the human body changed? No. What has changed? **Belief.**

Once I curiously attended a hypnosis gathering in Christchurch, New Zealand. I learned that in hypnosis, people could do amazing things. They could also do them in the waking state - if only they believed they could. In other words, hypnosis does not give new strengths, it only reveals the hidden ones. Recently, I read that in a hypnotic trance, a person could develop a blister by touching a piece of ice, simply because he was convinced that it was a piece of hot metal!

In some parts of the world, fire-walking on red-hot coals is a common-place. At Asian religious festivals, entranced mediums pierce their bodies and cut their tongues. They emerged with no pain or injury! In the medical field, the amazing healing effect of the dummy placebo pills is well-proven. Over the years, many medical journals have documented the remarkable recoveries of patients who had a fighting spirit and the determination to get well. Scientists found that the brain actually 'talks' to the immune system through a family of hormones called thymosins. Stunning isn't it? The lesson here is: Our limitations are self-imposed, and the mind is magical, whatever it can believe, can become reality.

The world has found the great blessing and potency of our beliefs system. Remember Norman Cousins? He employed comedies and laughter and cured his terminal illness. Look at the great Gandhi of India. He wore only a white sarong and slippers, yet he wielded more power than anyone living in his time! Although he had no trappings of dominance, like money or a great army, he had great faith, and he could instil faith in people, and exercise influence over 200 million countrymen at that time. All great achievers and leaders had great faith in themselves and their circumstances. Helen Keller believed she would learn to speak and she did. Columbus set out on voyages to prove the earth was round and he succeeded. Edison and Marconi believed deeply in their prowess and products. The faith of Buddha, Jesus and Prophet Mohammed have moved millions. The same faith empowers monks and nuns to live happily in the confines of convents and monasteries. It motivates numerous handicapped people to finish marathon races, often taking days. These are just a few examples.

I have studied, and read about many successful people. They made great use of their minds and inner resources to achieve fame and fortune. Their outside circumstances were, as usual too varied and complex for a simple or fixed recipe to succeed; only their internal attitude and resourcefulness could seal their victory. Tangible and intangible wealth begins after all, as a state of mind, a condition which manifests in the hearts and minds of the successful. We must have mental prosperity before we can reap physical riches. On the other hand, those who failed had been building limitations, negativism, poverty consciousness and reacting to life's troubles. They never realised that success and happiness were their birthright. Most people operated well below capacity, they simply lacked faith and confidence in themselves. They have sabotaged their own lives. Sad to say, scientists note that we use less than 10% of our brains' potential!

Our beliefs system comprises our values, perceptions, confidence level, deep interests and convictions. It gives us strength and direction in life. It drives our actions; in fact it moves our entire nervous system, and leads to performance and excellence. It has the magical force to create or crush any of our present or future possibilities. When we believe something is true, and embrace it, it tends to materialise, making our dreams come true, and we flourish!

My excellent news for you is that your beliefs are somewhat at your choice and disposal. The following are nice leads to help and strengthen you:

1. Shun negative influences, and weakening and dissipating environments.
2. Emotionalise your thoughts with dreams and burning desire, then translate them into plans, enthusiasm and actions.
3. Strengthen your knowledge and skills, employ visualisation and affirmation (self-suggestion, to be discussed later), these practices enhance your confidence and self-image, and boost your faith.
4. See yourself as successful, focus on your strengths, and devote yourself to things that you do well. Form supporting relationships.
5. Reinforce yourself with past achievements. Prepare to win again.
6. See and acknowledge no limitation to your power and potentials.
7. With consciousness of your competence, relax periodically to rejuvenate and integrate your positions for further achievements.
8. When beliefs are matured and consolidated, they culminate in a powerful position of faith, with invincible spirit and resolution.

I sympathise with many youngsters, they are often lacking in 2 things, namely, **self-confidence** and **motivation**. Confidence can be improved by: 1. Dwelling on strengths instead of weaknesses, and replacing negative thoughts with positive one vigilantly and swiftly. 2. Continuous affirmation and visualisation of one's excellence, progress and accomplishments.

Motivation is simple: 1. Have dreams and burning desire, set goals and get down to work. 2. Action creates motivation. Get cracking and that is it. 3. The habit of doing it now, and not wasting another minute is motivation. So you see, it is easier than you think. You should never see difficulty in anything in the first place, and I will leave with a popular verse here to strengthen you:

"If you think you are beaten, you are. If you think you dare not, you don't. If you like to win, but you think you can't, it is almost certain you won't." - Anonymous.

"Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared to believe that something inside them was superior to circumstance." - Bruce Barton.

"Man is made by his belief. As he believes, so is he." - The Bhagavada Gita Book.

"I think it's very much a 'can-do' attitude. I mean, I always feel like there is a

solution...it's not always obvious how to get to it, but if you keep searching you can figure it out." - N. Bushnell, electronic-game inventor.

"Faith marches at the head of the army of progress. It is found beside the most refined life, the freest government, the proudest philosophy, the noblest poetry, the purest humanity." - T. Munger.

"Act according to your faith. Everything is possible to the person who believes." - Jesus Christ.

"There are no limitations to the mind except those we acknowledge." - Napoleon Hill.

"Reason can go only so far, but faith has no limits." - B. Pascal.

"In actual life every great enterprise begins with and takes its first forward step in faith." - Schlegel.

"Profound belief in something allows every individual to find an immense inner force, and to overcome his or her failings." - S. Honda.

"It is the mind that maketh good of ill, that maketh wretch or happy, rich or poor." - Edmund Spenser.

"Faith is the force of life." - Count Leo Tolstoy.

## Chapter 32 The Magic of the Positive Mind.

The workings of our minds are of such complexity and endless intrigues that experts will probably never stop wondering and probing, for the remainder of human existence. Something strange and elusive is determining the vast difference in the success and happiness of people, and it is not as simple as luck or talent. Since the outside environment is complex and difficult for everyone alike, the chief determinant of success and happiness is none other than our positive attitude and inner selves. The world is beginning to realise that what really matters is the way we think and plan, the way we direct and mobilise our resources. Our thoughts affect the way we act, and mould the kind of lives we will live. The belief that we can succeed boosts our likelihood of success tremendously.

The great Psychologist William James commented, 'The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind.' He added, 'Most people live, whether physically, intellectually or morally, in a very restricted circle of their potential being.' Without a doubt the human intellect is one of God's most wonderful creations. Besides, there are immeasurable power and cosmic energy in the universe. Part of this energy permeates our minds, which are centres of some kind of human electro-magnetic field. This power can do much wonder, and nothing on earth can match it in intelligence and potency. The human being has conscience, will, reason, emotion, imagination, the 5 senses, and the subconscious with its 6th sense and extra-sensory perception. The average person is potentially a greater person than we normally realise. We can make just about anything of our lives, anything we wish and work for!

You are so lucky, nothing is more fortunate than someone who discovers his mind's powers early in life, this saves you years of hardship and problems! I wish I had made this discovery earlier myself. Now, if you want success, you can have it. Your future can be excellent and smashing, far beyond your dreams!

Thoughts are so powerful that they can sicken or heal, freeze or motivate, win friends or make enemies, and eventually make or break us! The medical world abounds in evidence of the mind's effect on health. For example, Dr G. Solomon and R. Moos (of Stanford University's Medical School) examined the histories of

5,000 rheumatoid arthritis patients, and concluded that the patients' emotional states influenced their physical conditions. In other medical researches, feelings of depression were matched to the recurrence of genital herpes. Mental stress was found to be a suppresser of our human immune system. Then there is the miraculous healing power at Lourdes in France. So far some 7,000 people have been cured of diseases, many of them recovered as a result of their beliefs. Can you recall Mr Addington's conclusion in his book *100 Per Cent Mind Power* after working on over 20,000 people? Whenever a person rights his thinking process, his outer experience changes and rights itself!

So remember always: **All our thoughts tend to take tangible forms and materialise in our lives, they create our reality.** Now, Let me give you some guidelines, please digest and memorise them:

**1. Awaken your mind.** It has all the mental wealth for prosperity and joy. Make it an adventure and personal challenge to learn more about it and to use its immense power. Practise first, by thinking positively.

**2. Daily thoughts are crucial.** They can be creative or destructive. Even a few words spoken here and there are full of impact and can change your life. Sometimes these words do not even have to be true for the mind to accept them. Words of praise and high expectation, for example, can motivate people. You can also think your way out of laziness, problems, anger or depression. For the next 24 hours, think and speak positively about everything in your life. Do that for a few weeks and see its amazing results.

**3. Limitations and negativism were acquired by people after birth, and self-imposed.** Cowardice and lethargy crept in over the years and tightened their hold. These were bedevilled by other additives: Underrating and selling themselves short; allowing worry and concern to dominate their living; blaming others; letting other people run their lives; failure to organise and direct their resources to higher goals and indulging in wishful thinking instead of purposeful thinking. In contrast, the man with a positive attitude never gives up, he always finds a way.

**4. You can choose your thoughts, and consequently, your future.** You also have divine guidance and protection from God, there is nothing to fear. He has given you full control of your mental faculties and you can think whatever thoughts you like, no matter what happens. This freedom is very precious. In times of hardship and distress you can focus your thoughts to right the wrongs and turn

things around. Such strengths can cushion you against great misfortune. You must always select the thoughts to advance your best interests.

**5. There are ways to develop positive thinking.** Firstly, nurture a strong sense of control (something parents should cultivate early in their children by singing praises of their little triumphs). Tackle problems swiftly with a feeling of infallibility and invincibility. Regain that original state of human mind, free from timidity. Secondly, think big, without limitations. Thirdly, use regular visualisations and affirmations, a skill I will impart to you later. Fourthly, avoid forcing the mind to accept suggestions, it may not work; instead convince it in a natural way. Lastly, shun negativism and negative people, and put in positives as replacements.

Go on, and replace your concern with confidence, despair with hope, problems with opportunities, discontent with gratitude, suspicion with trust, spite with love, gloom with cheer, etc. In another chapter, I will give you a useful 'vocabulary' to handle daily situations. It is interesting to note, that among friends I can easily spot the negative ones. They habitually say: 'Not that easy...Don't count the chicken before they're hatched...it's so competitive and difficult...' and true enough, they turn out to be the unsuccessful ones!

In ending, I beg you to carve these words in your mind: **All our thoughts tend to take tangible forms and materialise in our lives, they create our reality.**

"Success or failure in business is caused more by mental attitude even than by mental capacities." - Walter D. Scott.



## Chapter 33 The Miraculous Subconscious.

We talked about our conscious mind, and its positive thinking. Now let us probe deeper into our subconscious. Have you never noticed that whenever you decided to wake at 6 AM, you always did automatically? Sometimes, I was trying to get through to a friend's phone while he was busy dialling to me! On other occasions, we 'talked of the devil' and he appeared. We often gossiped and laughed through miles of demanding city traffic, without even knowing we were driving! Many 'perceptive' people can often guess a word we have written or something we hide inside one of our palms. That is the naughty behaviour of our subconscious. Its operation is outside our awareness, but it is always there, running 24 hours a day, and it even serves as our alarm clock!

Today we know the computer better than we know the mind that created the computer! The mind is so mysterious that it earns its place in God's Divine Scheme, more than other earthly things. We must revere it and tend it well. It is divided into two parts. Psychologists call the **conscious** the objective, waking mind, the surface self. The **subconscious** is termed the subjective, sleeping mind, the deep, hidden self.

The conscious mind is voluntary because you can easily control it; but the subconscious is involuntary and you can only manage part of it in a special way. The experts recognise that the conscious deals with immediate experience; while the subconscious goes off silently, into a world of its own, but there it is quietly cooking something for you! It runs the vital processes, including breathing and heartbeats. It is life-preserving. It provides your amazing intuitive capacity, and knows the answers to most problems. The outer mind reacts dramatically to whatever you think, but the inner subconscious is recording things secretly. Then it starts to affect your behaviour and destiny, in a way imperceptible to you. Those emotions and understanding that are stored away form our beliefs system that sways the outcomes in our lives. Those who have been negatively programmed over the years will therefore, have a tougher time reaching success. So be careful with your subconscious, and watch over your thoughts. It deserves good inputs just like the body, otherwise, you have a 'garbage in and garbage out' situation.

Here are the important guidelines for you:

**1. Make the best use of your subconscious in your sleep.** This power functions round-the-clock and works best in slumberland. The reasons are obvious; daytime bustles and hustles unsettle this hidden faculty. Harness your subconscious through prayers and deep-felt wishes before bedtime. An example is: ‘Almighty God, my Heavenly Father, I can’t thank You enough for everything...I know You’ll protect and guide me continuously towards joy and well-being...all problems will be solved in my sleep...I’ll wake up stronger for a better day...’ Add visualisation and affirmation, and the mind will take over automatically from there. Successful composers and writers professed that they prayed before they slept. Even cat-naps boosted their creativity and accomplishment.

**2. Use your subconscious to erase any trace of negativism.** You should not say, ‘I can’t afford this,’ say ‘I will buy this later.’ Never think: ‘This is a long-drawn and difficult project,’ think: ‘This task takes time and is easier done in stages.’ As I mentioned before, you must also replace negative thoughts with positive ones quickly, never give them even a split-second chance to tarnish your spirit and substance. Develop specific mental rehearsals too, to counter any snags that may pop up later. For feelings of recurring fears, confront those fears in their real-life situations, and prove to yourself those fears are unfounded. If you can do all the above, I can assure you, you will go a long way. All fears, frustrations, gripes and grudges, etc, must go.

**3. Harness your subconscious for beautiful human relationships.** Do this by visualising and dwelling on others’ strengths and goodness, with altruism. Expect and earn their affection and support in return. Over the years, people reported meeting someone by ‘coincidence’, who inspired and empowered them to make plans which led to success. We shall see these funny, subconsciously-triggered coincidences later.

**4. Manage your inner mind for healing, happiness and achievements.** Mental images and anticipation of desired outcomes can do wonders, if supported by tranquillity, prayers, beliefs, cheerfulness, enthusiasm, drive, determination and excellent performance; try them!

The subconscious accepts straightforward auto-suggestions, but it is strong enough to pose a hiccup or blockage when it smells a rat. Most people aspire to be rich and happy, yet many are not successful, even with the right goals, desires, and

self-suggestions. This is because the subconscious detects values and beliefs which are not sincere and absolute. These people are half-hearted, or they force themselves to go against their true conviction. The unconscious system overrides the conscious wishes of these people. It does it so silently that people fall short of their goals in surprise and frustration. In other words, your values must be truly embraced by you, your faith must be total, your goals must have wholehearted commitment, your desire and enthusiasm must be real and consuming. You get what you deserve!

Funny enough, the opposite can also prevail. Some people think they are plain, yet they breeze through to great success without efforts. Their faith (probably programmed since childhood) is so deeply-rooted that they are thrust easily onto grand achievements. Despite the paradox here, be assured that when you are fervent and sincere, your subconscious will always obey your command. That is why yogis can decrease their heartbeat and body temperature subconsciously; others can bar incoming injuries in religious trance. This hidden spirit is success-directed, problem-solving, and pain-reducing in all of us. In concluding, I want you to know that even the subconscious played a part in making McDonalds the largest chain of eateries world-wide. Its creator Ray Kroc said, 'I saw in my mind hundreds of McDonald's restaurants in all corners of the land.' Isn't life exciting?

"I believe in the God force that lives inside all of us, and once you tap into that you can do anything." - Oprah Winfrey, TV star.

"If we all did the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves." - Thomas Edison.

"Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions."  
- O. W. Holmes.

## Chapter 34 Visualisation and Affirmation, the Magic Carpet.

A singer-musician got into a horrific accident 21 years ago. A log from a timber truck burst through his windscreen and squashed him. Doctors gave up hope as he lay in a coma for days, linked to a life-support machine. Then came a lady from the music company. She held his lifeless hand - the only visible thing under the massive bandages - and sang a spiritual song loudly to him. Soon his subconscious heard her and his hand began to twitch! He recovered, and months later he went on to do the famous hit *You Are the Sunshine of My Life*. He is none other than our great Stevie Wonder. The singing was a special affirmation to his subconscious.

There is an interesting story from Al Koran's book *Bring Out The Magic In Your Mind*. A lady was craving for a piano, but had no money to buy it. She often visualised it there in her room, and fantasised dusting and playing it. Weeks later, someone called and asked if she wanted to buy a piano - an idea he got when he passed the house! The lady declined as she could not afford it. One day, she gave her seat in the bus to an old lady. They got off the bus at the same place, then the lady asked: 'Would you know anyone who could keep my piano for me? I have to live abroad for a few years.'

In my own home, the same has happened in our midst! My second daughter has been begging for a puppy for 2 years, and I told her: 'Try visualisation, and feel the puppy in your hand.' 'Dad I do!' She replied sadly, 'But it doesn't work.' As her birthday drew near, My wife decided to give her what she craved so much for, as the deprivation was beginning to hurt her. The puppy came. Visualisation did work for Lavinia after all!

An Australian Medical Journal once reported: 'Chinese doctor and nephew lost in snow...temperature below freezing point...alive the next day!' The doctor recounted his meditation and visualisation throughout the night, based on a mythological dragon's fire. They diffused themselves with warmth! Such tools were also used by Australian psychiatrists Dr A. Meares and Dr C. Simonton, who claimed many successes in treating cancer patients.

Such mind manipulation has been used since the 1950s by the Russians in training programmes, and since then they have won numerous Olympic medals. Nowadays, most sports champions and super salespeople employ visualisation and

affirmation. Those who do not risk being outmatched by those who do. A case in point is A. Schwartznegger, who said, 'It's all in the mind. When I was young, I visualised myself being and having what it was I wanted...The mind is really so incredible. Before I won my first Mr Universe, I walked around the tournament like I owned it. I had won it so many times in my mind that there was no doubt that I would win it.' Muhammad Ali, the great boxer, always chanted 3 words before his winning fights: 'I'm the greatest!' He had affirmed and predicted his victories! The great Buddha commented, 'All that we are is a result of what we have thought.'

You can recall that Mr Hilton of the global hotel chain, who finally bought the hotel he dreamed of buying for his mother. In another incident, I learned that a marketing millionaire in North America ended up - to her surprise - buying the exact Rolls-Royce she had visualised in a picture on her wall! Experiments in schools also showed that students who were told that they had done well in previous tests, actually went on to do better in the next attempt! Tests showed patients who were given 'good pills' got well on dummy placebo pills. John Robinson, head of the International Harper Group said, 'Without my belief system, my company would be a quarter of its current size...I see a hand signing the completed contract. I do this everyday, sometimes for years, until it happens.' Well, if the above incidents are not enough to convince you of the magic of visualisation and affirmation, few things will.

The Bible says, 'As a man thinketh, so is he.' Elbert Hubbard gave the best advice: 'Picture in your mind the able, earnest useful person you desire to be, and the thought you hold is hourly transforming you into that particular individual you admire.' Successful people in many fields use imaging. They rehearse their beautiful, faultless performance, step by step the night before. Learn to visualise, it is easy; just relax in a quiet area, then form vivid mental pictures of desired situations and outcomes in your mind. If you can physically touch the piano, car or house that you want, it is even better. Do it as often as you can. The subconscious has no past, present and future. It is all here and now; that is why traumatic experiences and phobias can affect people for years. Neither does the subconscious worry about truth or fantasy. This is a blessing in disguise, because whatever you fantasise and want in the future can be made here-and-now, sooner!

Now, here are examples of affirmations: 'Fun! Everyday I'm getting better

in every way...My beliefs system already puts me ahead of others...I came this way but once, so I'm making the best of every minute...There's a giant inside me, waiting to burst through...Nothing real or imaginary can stop my advance...' You can build your own lines. My favourite one is the C.A.T line, saying: 'I'm **C**apable, **A**ccomplished and **T**alented.' Whichever line you build up, say it many times a day until it sinks in. I will tell my secret here: Before I started this book, I frequently affirmed and prayed: 'My heavenly Father, please lead me through my resources to bring success and happiness to myself, my loved ones, and my fellowmen.' Now I have no doubt where I'm heading!

Look around us, it is funny how people go to great lengths to protect their houses against burglars. Then they allow a more ghastly robber, full of negativism and poison to enter their minds, which are infinitely more precious possessions. If you don't fantasise your wishes, your life may wither, soon your aura darkens and the 'thief' sneaks in! The destruction is more extensive than you think. You should instead, build mental images of splendid actions and achievements. Then you will grow stronger by the day, and capitalise on opportunities and fulfil your dreams. Visualisation and affirmation are powerful magic carpets, so are the habits of believing and expecting. Put together, they lead you to accomplish whatever you desire. They cost nothing but shower you with boundless well-being. Would you ignore such a big bargain in life? I can conclude now and say to you: 'Thank you for believing me and congratulations, on your great **oncoming success!**'

"Be very choosy therefore upon what you set your heart. For if you want it strongly enough, you'll get it." - Emerson.

"When an object or purpose is clearly held in thought, its precipitation, in tangible and visible form, is merely a question of time." - L. Whiting.

## Chapter 35 Psychic Capacities.

We have seen our conscious and subconscious faculties, now let us go deeper into the psychical field. This is more removed from our daily lives; yet it is intriguing, and adds to our valuable pool of knowledge and abilities. Psychic phenomena generally refer to extra-sensory-perception (ESP), like telepathy, precognition and clairvoyance, as well as other things like hypnosis, psychokinesis, and psychokinematics.

The book *Psychic Powers*, by the editors of Time-Life Books recounted that in 1955 Joicey Hurth, a girl of 5 in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, USA, was hit and slightly injured by a car as she was running to join her brothers at the theatre. She moved aside, and clamoured, 'Mama, Mama.' Her mother, at home some distance away, immediately felt her accident and quickly telephoned the theatre! This is a form of telepathy between people who are emotionally attached, and is quite common.

Two American presidents come to mind here, Lincoln and Kennedy. There were stunning coincidences in the calendars and environment of the 2 presidents who were assassinated. Both spoke of their approaching death. Hours before the fatal gunshot, Kennedy said, 'If somebody wants to shoot me from a window, with a rifle, nobody can stop it.' This is an example of precognition. The *Reader's Digest Book of Strange Stories, Amazing Facts* gave an interesting account of the French-Russian battles in 1812. The wife of a General Toutschkoff dreamed 3 times, that her father appeared sadly to inform of her husband's death: 'He has fallen at Borodino.' She warned her hubby, but they couldn't find Borodino on the map. In September that year, the Russian armies invaded France in an offensive that cost 85,000 lives, at the village of Borodino! Finally, her father entered, in real life, in a sorrowful stammer, 'He has fallen at Borodino.' This awareness of oncoming events is called clairvoyance.

Hypnosis is different. Started by Dr Mesmer 100 years ago, it is no longer just a stage gimmick for magicians! It is widely accepted as the state of deep relaxation and focus that is most responsive to visualisation and suggestion. It is now used as a cure for bad habits, disorders and illness. The success rate is dependant on the extent of participant's belief and submission. Self-hypnosis is

also being practised widely for self-healing and improvements.

Psychological journals in large libraries are full of experiments on psychic powers. Nowadays researchers are very confident of the accuracy and unbiased neutrality of their methods. One interesting experiment in New Jersey, USA, came out with a machine called the REG. Resembling computer games, it produced 100% random scores without human involvement. When a candidate was tested, her scores outsmarted the machine against odds of a thousand to one. This confirmed the human ESP and psychokinesis powers. Further afield, CIA and National Security are funding ESP development and testing mind powers, for future usage akin to star wars! As early as the 1970s, the Russians were already spending millions in these areas.

Much scepticism still shrouds ESP and psychokinesis (mind over matter). The *Book of Strange Stories, Amazing Facts* also documented 2 intriguing incidents: In 1879, the Prince Imperial - the son of the deposed Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugenie of France - was fighting for the British against the Zulu tribe in Africa. The exiled prince was later killed in battle. His body was retrieved and returned to England. A year later, Eugenie travelled to Zululand to see the spot where her son had died. On arrival, they had trouble finding the stone marking amidst the overgrown bush. Then Eugenie cried out: 'I smell violets; they were always his favourite flowers!' She then ran precisely to where he had fallen. (There are numerous other incidents of messages, writings, and even musical compositions from the dead. You can read about them in the library). The second incident involved a teenage soldier in the Russian Army years ago, called Ninel. She discovered that things in the house moved around her. She further practised concentration to strengthen her power, which was documented by researchers and film-makers. A Dr Sergeyer measured a high level of electrostatic field around her during her display! A more famous and recent exponent of mind-over-matter is Uri Geller of Israel, who in public appearances bent metals and made watches go crazy.

Anthony Norvell in his book *How To Develop Your Psychic Powers...* reported on a college girl, who was secretly in love with a boy in school. He was not aware she existed. After 2 disappointing years, she resorted to weeks of psycho-kinematis. She visualised and projected her love incessantly. One day she attended a football game and there he was. She licked her lips; but he was with his



other girl friend! In desperation she intensified her psychic suggestion: ‘You will call me, love me and marry me...’ She went all out with powerful desire, visualisation and projection. Suddenly, the Boy was standing beside her, asking for a date! They got married eventually.

It is fascinating to note that over the years, a few people emerged with the strange Stigmata. These bodily wounds duplicated those suffered by Jesus on the cross. The Church put forward 3 possible causes: Divine revelation from God; auto-suggestion and emotions; disruption by evil spirits. So far, none of these can be conclusively proven.

Please read more about psychic powers in the libraries. You can gradually learn and capitalise on them in the following ways:

1. Use auto-suggestions to realise your desires and goals.
2. Practise self-hypnosis to erase worry, anxiety and bad habits.
3. Channel telepathy to others for goodwill and co-operation.
4. Cultivate intuition to guide you in decisions and actions.
5. Practise relaxation, meditation to reinvigorate yourself, and enhance your creative endeavours in art, music or literature.
6. Nurture psychic abilities, to warn against danger ahead of you.

Emerson noted, ‘Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force, that thoughts rule the world.’ O. S. Marden stated, ‘The possibilities of thought training is infinite...Yet few take the pains to direct their thinking into channels that will do them good, but instead leave all to chance.’ We should wherever possible, use our psychic powers, particularly in the easier areas of telepathy, hypnotism and auto-suggestions. Usage gives us the winning edge over others. Let us tell our psyche to think our way and develop our desired future. Think: ‘I choose to feel happy and rich,’ and we do! The ability to visualise, plan and organise our lives, and to wield psychic powers may simply set us apart from the ordinary people.

## Chapter 36 Visions and Strategies.

Experts maintained that people with dreams, visions and strategies are quite often more powerful than those with only knowledge and skills. I couldn't agree more with them. If you can see ahead and anticipate things, you can adapt to changes and seize opportunities. Recently I met an acquaintance while flying, and we talked about 2 of my friends who had risen to the top 2 positions in his multinational firm. 'What really sets them apart from the others?' I asked curiously. He thought deeply and replied, 'They can stand back and look at the whole picture and the future.' Mr Kazuo Wada, Chairman of Yaohan International, said it rightly: 'The most important thing needed in the top executive of an enterprise is vision; an ideal, a dream of the future as it should be.'

Once there was a very hard working lumberjack who wouldn't rest. His progress slowed and each tree took longer. He kept at it, until finally he collapsed. He never thought of sharpening the saw! In his exhaustion he forgot to work smarter not harder, and to stand back and look at the picture. It is good to labour, but it is wiser to widen your field of awareness and vision. C. W. Leadbeater noted, 'It is the commonest of mistakes to consider that the limit of our power of perception is also the limit of all there is to perceive.' Furthermore, in life it is better to look where you are going than to see where you have been (unless you are learning from mistakes). It is also better to see the good side than the bad. Our prisons and ghettos are filled with people who failed to see the God-given beauty, abundance and potentials. The world would be a better place, if its leaders had fewer nightmares and more vision, and if we had more vision and less television! Far-sightedness is important because you cannot tackle the future on present premises and parameters. Life is an era of continuous change. Can you face the challenges of change without some foresight, insight and plans? Can you merely flounder, and fight surprises and obstacles with trials and errors?

Your first step towards good vision is to start with the end, and visualise that distinguished person you want to be, at say, 45 and 60. Next, you cultivate good foresight by keeping abreast and staying ahead. Study all the dynamic areas of change; areas in data processing and information technology, transportation and high-speed travel, lasers and electronics, foods and crops development,

exploration of minerals and potentials, space research, etc. You then identify the niche markets and rapid-growth fields that interlock with your hobbies, interests and aspirations. Subsequently you take inventory of your present and future resources. These include yourself, your family, human and capital resources, as well as relevant circumstances. If the circumstances are not there, create them! Then you visualise the various new human needs that will arise globally. The last step is to strategise. How will you harness fully all these resources for maximum results and demand-fulfilment within a scheduled period?

There is no doubt that God has a plan for each of us. We give the finishing touch. It is not enough to know where we are going, we have to know how and when we are getting there. So I cannot see how we can efficiently reach our goals by merely thinking about them. A good scheme gives reasons for taking initiative and the urge to take action. We must have a schedule and get down to work; otherwise we would be drifting aimlessly. Various distractions, negativism and obstacles will then run our lives, and we may never even get started!

Projects fail because people fail to plan. Imagine a house built candidly without a drawing; and a general fighting a war without strategies! Nowadays, even large corporations employ old Japanese and Chinese battle tactics. Look at how Coke and Pepsi are endlessly striving to outshine each other. Michael Jackson and Sir Elton John were paid millions to play on heartstrings and entice the world to the Colas. (The results were beyond expectation, even though Michael did not drink Pepsi and declined to hold a can for the commercial.) Prominent entrepreneurs like D. Trump, Richard Branson, Iacocca and Bill Gates all adopt ingenious strategies to advance their business empires. Charles Buxton noted, 'In life, as in chess, fore-thought wins.' The better we contrive, the clearer the plan of action, and the better prepared we are to use resources to achieve our objectives. After all, success is not always brought by lady-luck, or freak accidents.

Sir William Osler observed: 'When schemes are laid in advance, it is surprising how often the circumstances fit with them.' We should all have both a **General Plan**, and **Specific Strategies**. The General Plan applies to almost all situations, and includes guidelines, goals, and all the present and future resources needed to reach targets at estimated dates. It also provides a broad and long-term view, and thus the need to innovate, take risks and do things that may not make sense in the short term. The Specific Strategies apply to more exact situations. It

specifies the game plan for advancing, which are flexible and adaptive to changing situations, with contingencies and options. These channels of action are more specialised, so they are not only the manoeuvre of resources, but the development of stronger ones, through creative rethinking, reshuffling, retooling, reinforcement and renewals!

You really need the best stratagems to achieve your dreams,. Put things in place carefully, with thorough consideration and anticipation of variables, setbacks and uncertainties. Strategies need not be rigid timetables to restrict your freedom and creativity. Formulating a plan for your future is perhaps the most important and creative task you will ever undertake. It will in fact give you greater freedom and a richer, fuller life.

If you set high ideals and standards, with the concerted blessings of vision, desire, beliefs and enthusiasm, **you will simply find a way**. You will see little limitations and overcome hurdles courageously. D. Curtis once said, 'We are what and where we are because we have first imagined it.' We normally can see further than we can reach, but we should not stop **reaching**. As soon as we commit ourselves impetuously to making our dreams come true, the **where, when** and **how** will reveal themselves. Go for it!

"Many an object is not seen, though it falls within the range of our visual ray, because it does not come within the range of our intellectual ray." - Henry D. Thoreau.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish..." - Proverbs, 29:18.

"In business, like in the martial arts, the essential thing is not just to deflect the blows, but to foresee where they're coming from." - B.Tapie.

## Chapter 37 Clear Thinking, Judgement and Priorities.

We have seen the general plan and specific strategies, and we must now put things in the right order and set priorities. Priorities are vital, because living our lives is like baking a very sophisticated piece of cake. We have to put in the right amount of each ingredient, and do things in the right sequence; otherwise we will end up with a bad cake or a big mess. Before we determine priorities, we must first develop accurate thinking and judgement. In other words, we must see everything clearly and objectively, unclouded by immediate sentiments. In making that ‘cake of life’, we must clearly identify the ingredients and their quality, and notice the fresh flour and good raisins!

Thinking is often a process of matching your knowledge and experience with a new situation to get satisfactory opinions or solutions; whereas judgement is a viewpoint and evaluation of any situation or thing. Accurate thinking and judgement come from a good grasp of knowledge, everything and everyone around you. This knowledgeable stance also spawns insight and wisdom. Wisdom is intelligence, facts and expertise in graceful action. It pays therefore, to read, probe, analyse, think, travel, observe, and converse extensively.

As you grow, you can spot instances of poor thinking and judgement. You can tell from people’s weird hairdos, silly clothes, crazy car and house decorations, and messy lifestyle! I may condone these behaviours among magicians and show-business people, but elsewhere, it is a no-no. I can easily tell good or bad thinking and judgement from the work, reports, diagrams and presentations done by workers! Everything speaks loud and clear. I need not elaborate here, except to remind you that good tastes, colours, designs, appropriateness, considerations, convenience, psychology, etc, all have an impact on the recipients. Imagine an unkempt McDonald’s waitress; a shabby bank-manager scribbling cartoons; a drunk and dribbling airline-pilot and a nursery-teacher brandishing a whip!

Good thinking and judgement should also concur with our powers of reason and ethics, and we should not believe and accept everything blindly without regard for truth and worth. A good thinker and valuer considers the source, truth, purpose and quality of any information. He balances evidence and opinions carefully, then

decides and responds accordingly. Rash decisions and impulsive acts may create problems and failures, so please be clear, calm and cautious always.

The Bible states in Corinthians 1, 14:40, 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' The setting of priorities is part of organising and living successfully. It is the clever choice of things that deserve more emphasis, and things that are better done now than later. Goethe once said: 'Things which are more important must never be at the mercy of things which are less important.' Henry D. Thoreau warned of poor priority when he commented, 'For every thousand hacking at the leaves of evil, there is one striking at the root.' The best way therefore, to prioritised your strategies and schedules is to list them in clear sections of urgency and importance, as shown below. I filled in examples here for you. Note that some things are very important but less urgent:

**Mth: 9/98 Greatest Importance. Medium Importance. Least Importance**

**Greatest**

**Urgency**    *School & exam*            *Music exam this mth*    *Swimming test*

**Medium**

**Urgency**    *Reading & learning*    *Gymnastics*            *Main hobbies*

**Least**

**Urgency**    *Self-improvement*    *Tennis & games*            *Minor hobbies*

The above is a short-term table, and you should have a yearly one too. This is compulsory for everyone. If you merely prioritise haphazardly in your mind, the myriad daily distractions assault your brain and you are bound to neglect this or that! When you can see and think clearly, and set priorities, your monthly and yearly operations are well-organised. Then, coupled with all your assets and qualities, you will find that making decision and taking action is a breeze and a piece of cake!

"When everything has its proper place in our minds, we are able to stand in equilibrium with the rest of the world." - Frederic Amiel.

## Chapter 38 Opportunities are Everywhere.

Opportunities are everywhere, in the air, under the seas, on the land and beneath the earth too! Just cruise through the cities, there are businesses to be created and launched... buildings waiting to be painted. Drive into the country, there are miles of land for asparagus, tree-planting and cut-flowers... In Hong Kong, I walked into a bird shop and learned that people had been trapping grass-hoppers and breeding meal-worms, which were exported or fed to local pets daily, by the thousands! Others make donuts, umbrellas, plastic flowers; grow Bonsais, sell sizzling kebabs, or trade in valuable antiques.

In the Asian region, heaps of delicious ‘wood-ear’ fungi, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, sea weeds, nuts, fruits and fern-vegetables are harvested from the wild. They run into millions of dollars a year. A friend of mine employs workers to collect and export jelly-fish and shark-fins to Japan, worth thousands of dollars a week! Over the years, I have heard of numerous created or seized opportunities, which led to wealth. There are too many examples to be listed here. There were builders, for example, who offered to develop barren lands for old folks, in return for a share of the shops and offices to be built. Job-seekers offered to work without pay, in return for experience and the chance for permanent positions. Others started buying scrap metals ‘for a song’ long ago and accumulated riches. ‘There exist limitless opportunities in every industry.’ Charles Kettering, president of GM Research Corporation, stated, ‘Where there is an open mind, there will always be a frontier.’ Opportunities are everywhere.

The search and seizure of opportunities are extremely important. The rich and famous everywhere are harping and drumming on this, as you will see in this chapter. They concluded that the capture of opportunities is a big ingredient of success. You ignore this at your peril and poverty! J. P. Getty, the prominent billionaire-industrialist taught us: ‘The far-sighted businessman realises that he can render the greatest commercial service by taking advantage of every opportunity. And there are opportunities everywhere for creating new business, even entire new industries, and for building and expanding old ones.’ Sometimes, a casual remark from someone can spark an inspiration, or the onset of a windfall! Be vigilant, and keep a constant watch.

I think anyone who maintains initiative, alertness and thoughtfulness should stumble onto something sooner or later. Regine, the influential night-club magnate asserted: 'If you wait for things to happen by themselves...nothing will happen. You have to be on the ball, seek out events, stir people up. To find diamonds, you have to turn over a lot of stones...You have to make things work, so that history becomes your destiny.' The great Francis Bacon noted, 'A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds.' Ziglar, the success guru said, 'Luck is the sense to recognise an opportunity and the ability to take advantage of it.'

Few of us pause to notice with new eyes the endless marvels and possibilities, even in our daily lives. Would you see an opportunity in a 116-ton boulder? After a community spent US\$1,000,000 to remove the dangerous piece of rock? Well, as told in Denis Waitley's book *The Winner's Edge*, Mr Brett a sculptor did, in 1979 at Malibu, California! He paid US\$100 for it and carved it into a giant masterpiece monument, and earned a US\$1 million bonanza! You see, a different set of eyes and attitude can make heaven of hell, diamond of dirt!

Most great achievements were initially considered impossible, they were breaks unnoticed. The opportunities are here, right where you are standing. If you keep looking far away, by the time you reach the greener pastures you will be too old and tired to climb the fence! This reminds me of the story of a farmer who sold his farm and went everywhere for most of his life, prospecting for diamonds; only to learn finally that the richest diamond mine was found under the farm he had sold! Little wonder that experts are reminding us to prosper in our own acre of diamonds. Theodore Roosevelt told us, 'Do what you can, with what you have, with where you are.' J. Oppenheim remarked, 'The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance; the wise man grows it under his feet.' Sometimes opportunity knocks on the front door when we are in the backyard looking for it. Then there are others who left the dock, just before the ship came in!

A funny paradox of opportunities is that they often sprang from problems and difficulties! Many achievers tripped on a new idea or a great pathway in times of hardship. The old saying 'The darkest hour is before dawn' is so true. Napoleon Hill, the renowned success teacher said, 'Opportunity has the sly habit of slipping in the back door, and often it comes disguised in the form of misfortune, or temporary defeat.' Failures are only intermediate results; problems are only hidden opportunities for solutions and improvements. Hence, setbacks create



solutions and even new products in the market. Ann Landers, the advice-columnist, reminded us that, ‘Good opportunities are often disguised as hard labour, that is why so few people recognise them.’

The president of Remington Corporation, Victor Kiam observed: ‘Entrepreneurs are those who understand that there is little difference between obstacle and opportunity, and are able to turn both to their advantage. Their willingness to seize initiative sets them apart from their contemporaries...they make things happen.’ J. P. Getty viewed this clearly: ‘The individual who is able to perceive a glimmer of possibility in a situation that seems, at first glance, full of insurmountable obstacles, is the one who is most likely to reap the greatest benefits.’ L. P. Jacks aptly commented on this situation, ‘The pessimist finds difficulty in every opportunity; the optimist finds opportunity in every difficulty.’ What a clever piece of remark!

They say, ‘Never pass a temptation lightly by, it may never occur again.’ Opportunities come but they do not linger, and in this competitive world someone will snatch it. Have you never felt a sudden impulse to do something? Then for some reason you paused and procrastinated, and soon the chance was gone forever. A competitor quickly clinched what you fumbled! I have experienced this myself. Hesitation is often the graveyard of opportunities.

This teaches us too that timing is crucial in our lives. Doing something you want to do, and finding that the occasion is perfectly right, is the birth of your good luck and success. This is where **preparation is powerful as it meets opportunity**. Estee Lauder, the founder of the world-class cosmetics company pointed out: ‘In every life there is a moment - an event or realisation - that changes life irrevocably. One must be able to recognise the moment and seize it without delay.’ Ecclesiastes, a philosopher wrote 2,600 years ago: ‘There is a season and time to every purpose under heaven. A time to tend, and a time to sow.’ Our brilliant William Shakespeare described it better: ‘There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.’ You can rest assured, that your chance will arrive sooner or later to empower and enrich you. ‘There’s nothing more powerful in the world than an idea whose time has come.’ Said Mr. Red Motley.

If you have the slightest doubt about your future share of ‘opening sesame’, one of the world’s riches man J. P. Getty assures you: ‘Sooner or later, every

business man has his big opportunities... He must be able to notice them when they present themselves, and he must also possess the imagination, ability and willingness to work hard - the elements needed to make the most of his opportunities.' Provide the circumstances and preparation, one day, opportunity will come knocking. Here are good tips for you:

1. Keep your mind and eyes open for new ideas, products, variations, improvements or even wishful thinking. There is always another Garfield or Rubik's Cube waiting to be discovered.
2. Don't overlook any possibility, right in your kitchen, or office. Is there a problem to be solved, a product to ease hardship? Remember, a glimmer or casual remark has led to great things.
3. Starve and shrink your problems; but feed and swell your opportunities. Go ahead and keep your eyes alert, and your brain clicking all the time!

"Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises." - Demosthenes, Greek statesman and orator.

"Thorough preparation makes its own luck." - Joe Poyer.

"Problems are only opportunities with thorns on them." - H. Miller.

"We find only the world we look for." - Henry D. Thoreau.

"Wealth is the product of man's capacity to think." - Ayn Rand.

"To improve the golden moment of opportunity, and catch the good that is within our reach, is the great art of life." - Samuel Johnson.

## Chapter 39 Enthusiasm.

I am excited about this lesson, which I looked forward so much to write, knowing well that enthusiasm is everything in life. It is the very act of **eyeing** all the beauties, wonders and abundance around us, and moving in to **enjoy** them all. Wouldn't you like to have all the nicest things in the world, and to share them with everyone? I have always wanted a black Yamaha or Steinway piano, the most-popular Fender Stratocaster electric guitar, a keyboard that plays like a real saxophone or orchestra, and a hi-fi set that brings a concert right into the house! I am planning large fresh-water and marine aquariums in my house, filled with sea-horses, lobsters, and colourful fishes. Not forgetting the most fascinating flowers, the funniest-looking pets in my own little zoo, and serenades from the loveliest song-birds!

I shall revel regularly around the globe with my wife and kids. Rio in Brazil, Cape Town in Africa, the Bahamas, Galapagos Islands, Switzerland and all the 4 Disney playgrounds! I know well my family can have all these in 10 years, or sooner! If we advance every minute of the day for 10 years, with 5,256,000 minutes multiplied by 5 of us, think of the grounds we would cover, the progress we would make! With dreams and earth-shaking enthusiasm, who can stop us? Wouldn't you do the same too?

Charles Buxton said, 'Experience shows that success is due less to ability than to zeal. The winner is he who gives himself to his work, body and soul.' The rich and famous stressed that enthusiasm and success always go together, because human impetus can do wonders. Emerson declared, 'Every great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is the triumph of enthusiasm. Nothing great was ever achieved without it.' Thomas Watson, the creator of the giant IBM computer company advised us: 'The great accomplishments of man have resulted from the transmission of ideas and enthusiasm.'

Oprah Winfrey, perhaps the biggest TV success in recent years, revealed it all: 'I am where I am not because money was ever... my motivation. If you want to accomplish the goals of life, you have to begin with the spirit.' Alexander Bogomoletz commented, 'One must not lose desires. They are mighty stimulants to creativeness, to love and to long life.' John Rockefeller, American industrialist,

financier, and founder of the Standard oil Company commented: ‘Do you know anyone who is zealous in his work? He is the equal of kings.’

The word enthusiasm was derived from the Greek words *En theos*, which mean *With God, inspired by God, and with the energy of God*. ‘You can do anything if you have enthusiasm,’ said Henry Ford, who started and built the superlative Ford Company, ‘Enthusiasm is at the bottom of all progress. With it there is achievement. Without it, there are only alibis.’ In one study, 200 executives were asked what leads to success, and 80% listed enthusiasm as the most important quality. Can we ignore the combined views of 200 discerning executives?

Normally, enthusiasm coupled with other average human qualities, is enough to help a person to rebound from failure to success. It also helps to drown shyness, uncertainty or even depression. H. W. Arnold said: ‘The worst bankruptcy in the world is the man who has lost his enthusiasm. Let a man lose everything else in the world but his enthusiasm and he will come through again to success.’ Many people label enthusiasm as the Number One Asset. The loss of a zest for living is probably the worst thing that can happen to a human being, it is almost the loss of his life.

At work in the corporate environment, our enthusiasm boosts our performance remarkably. It leads to profitability and well-being, for ourselves, our co-workers and the company as a whole. Furthermore, this state of mind draws delight and co-operation from others. Harold Geneen, of the giant AT & T Corporation commented, ‘We wanted people who were intelligent, knowledgeable and experienced, but in choosing among candidates who had those attributes, I wanted men around me who shared my enthusiasm for work.’ Everywhere, excitement is extremely infectious, so is the lack of it. Even in communication, an enthusiastic speaker invigorates us, while a dull delivery puts us to sleep. If Hitler’s passion and oration could send a nation against the world, and start the 2nd World War, you can imagine the power of such obsession. The same impetus propelled the Japanese to do likewise in 1939, with tragic and horrific consequences.

Another wonder of enthusiasm is that it gives rise to a host of other blessings and assets, like optimism, a pleasing personality, radiance, energy, confidence, diligence, endurance, initiative, teamwork, creativity, inspiration, and

many other positive attributes that lead to success and happiness. The distinguished Conrad Hilton had this to say: 'As far back as I can remember, I was marked with the sign of enthusiasm... Inevitably, with such attributes, it is difficult not to lead a full, active life.'

We tend to forget that enthusiasm is already happiness in itself! After all, our well-being is a manner of progressing, not a destination. We simply function more smoothly and joyfully when we are stimulated and treasure-seeking. Kingsley said rightly, 'We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life, when all that we need to make us really happy is something to be enthusiastic about.' Benjamin Disraeli, the former British prime minister, took us beyond the normal qualities of enthusiasm when he declared, 'Every production of genius must be the product of enthusiasm.'

There is also much beauty in enthusiasm. Which is prettier, a toad or a hummingbird? 'Zest is the secret of all beauty. There is no beauty that is attractive without zest.' Said Christian Dior, the prominent and celebrated creator of beautiful products. For this reason, it is sad to note that a conceited and spiritless adult loses not only his attractiveness, but suppresses enthusiasm in his children, when they run to him and are responded with a careless, I-know-it-all, that's-nothing-new attitude. Excitement and fervour are not only beautiful, they are extremely rejuvenating and curative. It is now proven that the eager, lively, and happy-go-lucky type not only combats illness, but blocks it in the first place. Fun and joy can truly immune or heal.

We can easily cultivate our enthusiasm by mixing with enthusiastic people, reading motivational materials and thinking enthusiastic thoughts. Then we set our desired goals, 'dance' merrily towards them, and enjoy every minute of the way. There is so much in the world to see and do, people to meet, adventures to enjoy, great abundance to cherish and to give. There is more than enough, to keep us amused every hour of the day, every day of the year. Life is wonderful.

## Chapter 40 Drive.

I am lucky, motivation comes to me as naturally as breathing and blinking. This is because I have goals, and my burning desire stirs and steers me towards them. I always say motivation is simple, once you have set the goals to work on, **action is motivation.**

Action however, must come first. If we wait till we are comfortable and in the mood, we may wait forever! If we wait for the perfect circumstances to act we will never begin; if we strive for perfection, we will be frustrated most of the time. We can never get much done, unless we go ahead and do it before we are 'ready'. The beauty here is that after we get involved motivation follows, in line with our intrinsic urge for usefulness and accomplishment. Motivation comes from initiative and a hunger for rewards. It's the vitality that turns us from a lame duck into a charging lion, going in for the kill. For those who are slow to act, the best motto for them is: Get cracking, by tomorrow, today will be yesterday.

Much fuss has grown among businesses around the world, in various attempts to arouse both the urge to work and the vigour for achievement. Now that we know that motivation is simply brought by action, the task should become progressively easier. Without action there is simply little or no success. All purposes must be followed by performance to get results. Even winners of large lotteries had to go out to buy the tickets in the first place! If we could incite dynamics in people in place of indifference and lethargy, think what could be accomplished in the world!

Emerson said, 'The world belongs to the energetic.' Many successful people found, to their amazement, that they had undiscovered potential and hidden physical, mental, emotional resources. Just look at the achievements and endurance in outer-space, mountaineering, and various punishing sports and races. Not to forget the various miraculous human feats performed in emotional, emergency and life-threatening situations.

Then there were the common jacks who became kings. Outstanding success stories have originated in the slums, among the least-likely candidates like poor labourers, miners and penniless new immigrants! In their pursuit of greatness, these people would not settle for anything less, they would feel incomplete in a

common kind of existence. On the other hand were good-looking, privileged and well-endowed people who could never amount to anything! They simply lack the most vital ingredients - the fiery dynamo and determination to succeed.

Then there is the third category, people in distressing environments like prisoners-of-war, jail inmates, and those on long, solitary expeditions. Scientists found that they managed to keep their sanity, vitality and enthusiasm by utilising all their outer and inner resources. They took interest in every inch of their available space. They wrote poetry, played chess or golf in their minds and even went 'globe-trotting.'

In the light of the above, here are some good guidelines on developing drive and motivation:

1. Clarify life's purpose, acknowledge your potentials and talents.
2. Nurture a powerful self-esteem and image.
3. Recognise the abundance, and the opportunities for success and happiness. Build dreams and arouse your great burning desire.
4. Set clear goals, coupled with personal mission statements.
5. Determine your strategies, priorities, action plans & schedules.
6. Make and keep stringent commitments to yourself; insist on complete success and nothing less. Have readiness to overcome setbacks, which are treated merely as normal stepping stones.
7. Create a commanding necessity to reach excellence, supported by powerful initiative, habits and time-usage. Hunt and destroy negative thoughts and habits that are unworthy of your goals.
8. Procrastination is totally prohibited. Act now.
9. Make progress by the minute, love your work and reward yourself along the way. Split tasks into manageable pieces.
10. Your moods and impulses must be subservient to your iron will. Be result-oriented, and promote win-win and team spirit.

Motivation must draw from a pool of endless vitality. Our success depends on our fitness and vibrancy, so do not underestimate the importance of good mental and physical health. We should re-charge our batteries with enough nutrition, rest and exercise. Planning our work and setting priorities also improve efficiency and reduce wastage of time and energy. Suspicion, anger, discontent, worry, argument and other forms of the negative behaviour sap our strength; avoid them. Skills for

the reduction of fatigue and for successful living in general, require discipline, flexibility and common sense. Here are some good suggestions for creating and conserving energy:

1. A quiet mind, alternated with soft music and fresh diversion activities (like tending garden and flowers) will best relax you.
2. Short cat-naps work wonders, and are as good as hours of sleep.
3. Do tough tasks first, you will be too tired to tackle them later.
4. Sleep and wake early; or you will need more rest to cure the harm done to yourself after working beyond midnight.
5. Tension and extravagance (like over-spending and eating, etc.) can wear you down. Conserve your strength for lucrative work.

When we have 'arrived' and prospered, we will have excess time, money and energy to spend in any way we like! That is the wonderful paradox of success. Then we will succeed further, because nothing succeeds like success! We will surmount all obstacles and reach great heights in our lives because we have to; inside our chests are explosive dreams, too big, too pulsating and pressing to be tamed or denied. Let's get cracking; by tomorrow, today will be yesterday!

"Energy and perseverance can fit a man for almost any kind of position." - T. F. Merseles.

"Vigour is contagious; and whatever makes us either think or feel strongly adds to our power and enlarges our field of action." - Emerson.

"Take time to deliberate, but when the time for action has arrived, stop thinking and jump in." - Napoleon Bonaparte.

"The greatest single thing in the qualification of a great player, a great team, or a great man, is the desire to reach the objective that admits of no interference anywhere." - B. Rickey.

"Years wrinkle the skin, but lack of enthusiasm wrinkles the soul." - Joe Applegate.



## Chapter 41 Decisions and Actions.

Months ago, a relative of mine cried a few times under the burden of her job. She had to work almost every night, leaving her 2 babies hollering at home, and her husband in a fix. Then one day, she decided that enough was enough, and she acted on her decision. She made enquiries and soon landed herself in a much better job; less working hours, better pay, longer leave, and so on. Later her company announced a half year's profit of US\$20million, and good bonuses and newly-listed stocks for its employees. Is this for real? It is. As you go through life, you will hear of more incidents like this. The lesson from this is: **Do it now!** If you don't act you'll never go beyond where you are now.

Thomas Watson, founder of IBM said, 'The worst possible thing we could do was to lie dead in the water with any problem. Solve it. Solve it quickly, solve it right or wrong. If you solve it wrong, it would come back and slap you in the face and then you could solve it right.' This teaches us that making a wrong decision is better than no decision at all. Often we do things better after learning from mistakes. If we make absolutely no decision nothing will improve, and we will never learn from the whole experience.

Any analysis of failures invariably shows the other side of the coin. Instead of making changes and making things happen, failing people let things happen to them and allow life to throw all kinds of rubbish at them. We must not allow that and we must not let grass grow under our feet. By not deciding and responding, we put ourselves under the thumbs of people and circumstances. Chaotic and pathetic situations are the consequence of indecision. Shakespeare put it rightly: 'At certain moments, men are masters of their fate; and if our condition is found wanting, the fault lies not in the stars, but in ourselves.' Resolutions for change are therefore vital to progress and success, but it's not easy; just look at ourselves and others around us. There is a fair bit of stubbornness prevailing. E. Raudsepp said, 'To win big, you must be adept at overcoming the central problem - resistance to change.'

Making things happen can turn us from a dead duck into a live volcano. This brings change that detaches us from the barren past and ushers into a fertile future. Winston Churchill, one of the greatest British prime ministers remarked

beautifully: ‘To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.’ We shouldn’t be afraid to change and to make mistakes, as long as the mistakes are not too costly; we will be wiser in the end. Elbert Hubbard, the great American writer commented, ‘The greatest mistake anyone can make is to be afraid of making one.’ Bern Williams observed, ‘If we try and fail, we have temporary disappointment. If we don’t try, we have permanent regret.’

Experts found that successful people made decision quickly and seized opportunities, but changed their mind slowly thereafter. They stuck to their guns through thick and thin! I believe we should make changes, but not too often, or we turn into rolling stones. The best approach is to find a **beautiful balance** between flexibility and persistence.

Our decisions and actions create our destiny. All our lives are a series of choices, leading us to where we are and where we shall be. The old saying is: ‘We reap what we have sown.’ We must therefore make the right choices to go far in life. At the same time we must **respond** intelligently and wisely, not **react** blindly or impulsively. We may not be able to formulate all the situations that meet us in life, but we can tailor-make the attitudes to tackle or fit those situations! For example, if you missed your train, or if your plane was late, should you stamp your feet and yell at people, or would you rather make your extra time enjoyable and useful? So influence your environment and mould your circumstances, as the great Benjamin Disraeli said, ‘Man is not the creature of circumstances; circumstances are the creatures of men.’

Even in your youth, you should begin identifying your interests and talents, and start making decisions. You could for instance, choose to get a good all-round education first, then slowly specialise as you go along and realise your areas of liking and strength. The initial all-round knowledge will help you to make wiser decisions later. In this way, you are following the right sequence of standing and walking before running! The additional lesson here is that you must be equipped with most, if not all of the facts and figures, to allow you to make good choices. When you are knowledgeable and wise, you need not rely on others to make selections for you. After all, everyone is unique, and other people’s background and experience are unlikely to suit or help you completely. Learn to stand on your own feet, and the more you practise decision-making the better you will be. Turn every stumbling block into a stepping stone!

Decisions and actions, with fruitful performance, lead to power. The decided man, who controls and perfects his actions with consistency, is a master of his destiny. In ending this lesson, I want you to remember these always: Bank on the mightiness of decisions and actions. Enjoy initiative and decision-making. Stick to your decision but be flexible where necessary. Make decisions often and learn from them. It is in these moments of decision and action that you seal your future and fortunes.

"Concerning all acts of initiative and creation...the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves, too." - Goethe.

"In every success story, you find someone has made a courageous decision." - Peter Drucker, the renowned management expert.

"The man who insists on seeing with perfect clearness before he decides, never decides. Accept life, and you must accept regret." - Frederic Amiel.

"From a certain point on, you have to make a decision and press on without looking back." - W. Phillips.

"If I had to sum up in one phrase what makes a good manager, I'd say that it's that ability to make decisions." - L. Iacocca, Chrysler.

"An executive is a man who decides; sometimes he decides right but always he decides." - John H. Patterson.

"Action creates more fortune than prudence." - M. de Vauvenargues.

"Without action a good decision becomes meaningless, for the desire itself can die through a lack of attempt to achieve its fulfilment." - W. C. Stone.

## Chapter 42 Focus.

I am sure you have tried burning a piece of paper, with sunlight focused intensely onto a spot through a magnifying glass. It works, until you start wavering your hand. The same goes for our lives, if we waver towards our goals we will never go far. Nowadays, with the power of focus and laser technology, beams of light are cutting through metals and are even performing surgery inside human bodies! This is stunning to me, even at my age. The formidable power of water or light, when concentrated in a fine straight line is incredible. Under normal circumstances, with other things as they are, a strong concentration of zeal, ability and persistence is enough to lead you to sizeable accomplishments. When your attention and efforts are directed on **one goal**, you can imagine how powerful you will be. And if **all** of your mind power was focused, you would be invincible!

People who have contributed to society and left their golden footprints have been men of **one unique idea, overwhelming passion and a single aim**. Great achievers in the world showed great focusing capacities, namely: Edison, Honda, Disney, Ray Kroc, Sam Walton, Thomas Watson, Henry Ford, Steven Spielberg, Bill Gates; the list goes on. None of the great champions (in chess, golf, tennis, ballet, ice-skating and various sports and contests) could have reached their pinnacles without this capacity. Edison's concentration was intense enough to grind him through a thousand attempts and failures, before the light bulb finally emerged! He also brought us a string of other inventions. Obviously, he focused all of his mind, body and soul on a project until it was successfully completed.

Soichiro Honda of the Honda Company admitted: 'I got myself completely absorbed in my job as apprentice inventor. I let no one disturb my concentration.' Andre Gide also commented rightly: 'To make an idea succeed, you have to concentrate on that idea alone.' The distinguished J. D. Rockefeller remarked: 'Singleness of purpose is one of the chief essentials for success in life, no matter what may be one's aim.' 'I've always believed that if you stick to a thought and carefully avoid distraction along the way, you can fulfil a dream...', said the successful Estee Lauder, 'I kept my eye on the target, whatever that target was...I've always believed that success comes from not letting your eyes stray from that target. Anyone who wants to achieve a dream must stay strong, focused

and steady.’

When you are focused you make greater progress, but when you are going round in circles you may go sideways or backwards, sapping precious time, energy and resources. I am sure many of the unsuccessful in the world are going in different directions and trying to do too many things at once. They end up doing none of them well. They become jacks of all trades and masters of none. There are always people who think it is clever to kill many birds with one stone, and to test the limits of their capacities. The truth is, we do have physical limitations. Concentration brings gain, but dissipation brings losses. As Emerson asserted, ‘Concentration is the secret of strength in politics, in war, in trade, ... in all management of human affairs.’

Please remember, that your focus will be strongest in the pursuit of things you love most. That is why I always advocate the building of careers around hobbies and talents. Experts conclude that there is joy in being engrossed in things we love doing. Life is productive when work is play and joy. The famous psychologist, Sigmund Freud gave his recipe for happiness as: ‘Work and love.’ Lest we forget, concentration is also a part of our large armoury of skills in meditation, self-hypnosis, visualisation, affirmation, positive thinking, problem-solving, creativity, memory-training, cultivation of psychic energy and so on! Many areas of our endeavour require some form of concentration or tunnel vision. Excellent focus therefore, contributes not only to achievements, but to happiness and general well-being too.

Did you know that your focus on things can also change your moods? You can get depressed quickly, just by focusing on grudge, failure or injustice in your past! If you re-direct your attention on past successes and fun times, and anticipate more good things to come, you will feel contented and energetic immediately. Whatever you focus on will shape your feelings and attitude, and will gradually and eventually become your reality! Just focus on what you want, then good physiology, environment, and rewarding experience will follow, isn’t that wonderful? So let us be careful, and avoid hasty assumptions and negativism; let us see clearly and positively, and choose intelligently what we dwell on.

Determination and persistence are very important partners to focus. The rich and famous, in looking back have admitted that if they had thrown in the towel at the tough moments, they would have missed out on success. P. T. Barnum

advised rightly: 'Don't disperse your forces. Once occupied with a thing, stick to it until you succeed,...More than once, a fortune slipped through someone's hands because he undertook too much at the same time.' The Roman orator Cicero said, 'Careful attention to one thing often proves superior to genius and art.'

On your next assignment, try full concentration, avoid interruptions and put in all your mind, heart and soul. You will be surprised how good and coherent the result turns out to be! Make it your life-long objective to master your attention and focus. Ignore distraction and concentrate long enough to achieve your goals. My concluding advice is: Aim **high**, aim **straight** and progress intently without wavering or faltering!

"Firmness of purpose is one of the most necessary sinews of character, and one of the best instruments of success. Without it genius wastes its efforts in a maze of inconsistencies." - Lord P. Chesterfield.

"The great thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving." - O. W. Holmes.

"All that you dream of, all that you yearn for and long to be, will be within your reach if you have the power to affirm sufficiently strong, if you can focus your faculties with sufficient intentness on a single purpose." - O. S. Marden.

"Concentrate all your thoughts upon the work in hand, the sun's rays do not burn until brought to a focus." - A. G. Bell.

"With peak concentration comes peak confidence: Watch Greg Norman set himself for a drive and the concentration is so intense it dazzles." - Mark H. McCormack, on the golf champion.

## Chapter 43 Good Memory.

No one can dispute the importance of good memory. Remembering names, faces, phone numbers, facts, etc, all contribute to awareness, skills, efficiency and performance. All these culminate in social success and commercial advancement. Various memory-wizards in the world have shown some stunning feats. They remind us that we do have these potentials which we overlook or take for granted. Today, we will develop some memory skills, and we will meet the most peculiar word in the English language - Mnemonics, it is spelled like no other, and it means, the art of improving memory.

Mnemonic scientists identify 2 main items in the memory process: 1. The Memory Trace, of the thing or event remembered. This may fade with time or overcrowding, causing the Trace Decay. 2. The Trigger or Retrieval cue, which is a present or past situation that can recall memories. The main reason why we forget is that our surroundings do not always give the right cues to trigger off the return of lost information. Contrary to popular belief, the Memory Trace does not decay much with age, they remain hidden in your brains. One needs only to revisit a childhood place, to find a flurry of forgotten memories returning vividly! The Triggers are there to awake those experiences of long ago. When trying to remember something, it is important to relive the intellectual and emotional state you were in when the inputs first entered your memory system. Funny enough, an indirect pursuit of an elusive name or phone number often turns out more fruitful. So, the good news is: Few things are lost from memory, if you can find the right key, you can unlock the lost treasures! Mnemonic gurus recommend the following keys for improved memory:

**1. The Visual and Imagery Way.** At parties and conventions, slow down to memorise names and faces during introductions. Spend more time to study looks and behaviour, not just name-tags. Focus on unique and prominent features and tie these to names. I am sure you can remember the lady with the cherry-red nose called Mrs Cherish. Likewise, a Miss Chester or a Mr McCormack (comical), can be remembered by her flat chest and his clownish behaviour! You may not always get the perfect coincidence for imagery, but there are many visual cues to tickle your recall later and you should use them. I used to tell my kids that one of the

best ways to master spelling is the visual approach. Just etch the look of a word in your mind, and after a while it is easy. That is why Parris and Gineva don't look right until they are Paris and Geneva. Poodle and Dalmatian look good, but Poodel and Dalmatian look awful! You can also remember numbers visually if their appearances are obvious or haunting. Take the phone number 8855102 - Two fat children sitting, two thinner ones running with a bat and ball (10) after a swan (2)! Doesn't 8442255 look like a doll and 2 aerobic girls scaring the 2 geese away? The fat look and jingle of say 899 897 is equally easy.

**2. The Organisational Method.** It is best to organise a string of things into categories or segments, then put them in a certain order for easy recollection. For example, let us take a mouthful of things: Grapes, pencil, hammer, apple, radio, calculator, matches, racquet, papaya, water-melon, torchlight, and hair-dryer. First, remember the total number - 12, then put them into 3 meaningful groups of fruits, wooden and electrical things, finally you put them in ranking order of sizes, and you get:

(Water-melon, papaya, apple, grapes)

(Racquet, hammer, pencil, matches)

(Radio, torch-light, hair-dryer, calculator) Recalling these is easier.

Phone numbers can also be organised for easier memory, like this:

248 953 - Rising and falling pattern; 1 added to each falling digit!

65 48 50 - 65 in that township, USA had 48 states, then 50 states.

33 36 11 - 33 for that suburb, mother's age 36, brother's age 11.

**3. The Association Technique.** The above phone numbers also use this technique, associating with geography and ages. Similarly, the **Visual Way** was also thrown in, as in the cases of cherry nose and flat chest! Association provides the trigger effect to arouse recall, this is why a childhood place or even a song, can bring back memories. You can for instance, associate the names and faces of people with various furniture and items at a party. The doorbell with Mr Bell, the camera with Miss Cameron, the aquarium with Mrs Fisher, and the mirror with Mr Murray!

Experts devise codes for registering numbers in the mind, and here are



examples: 0 = egg or ball. 1 = brush or spear. 2 = duck or swan. 3 = camel or butterfly. 4 = yacht or girl. 5 = runner or snake. 6 = lamp or elephant. 7 = flag or walking stick. 8 = doll or snowman. 9 = racquet or elephant trunk. 10 = bat and ball. Isn't that fun? I have used some of these too for phone numbers earlier.

Memory pegs have also been developed for the recall of a story or text. These pegs can come from common items around the house, such as window, door, carpet, lamp, dinning-table, flowers, hi-fi and piano. They can help you to recall, say a funny story you read. I will show an example here: 'We were startled when John and a chimp appeared, tapping at the window, Mary ran to open the door, the chimp's big feet made wet imprints in the carpet. He was smiling; his head was as big as the lamp-shade! He joined us at dinner and later fiddled with the flowers on the table. The house was frenzied with excitement. Then 'Goliath' started dancing to our hi-fi music, and joined us at the piano!' For starters, I have shown you a simple, direct form of association with memory pegs. Mnemonic experts use pegs for more complex stories, and you can read about these in your libraries.

**4. Accentuation for emotions and the 5 senses.** If you were introduced, at a rose garden, to a girl named Rose Profumo, who wore much perfume, you probably would not forget her. Everything was accentuated for your senses: Roses, fragrance and perfume! Even hearing alone can memorise things; try saying 234284 7 times, the jingle is enough to carve it into memory.

In conclusion, let us not forget that good memory must follow intelligent priorities, and remembering names and faces is a top priority. Other things like phone numbers which are hardly used can be recorded anyway. We should care about people first, and we always remember things we care about! After all, we usually need to put in some concern or enthusiasm to remember something well. Let bear in mind too, that memories are parts of a happy life. Pleasant and grateful memories contribute to happiness, while past wrongs and grudges destroy it. Let us harbour good and beautiful memories always.

## Chapter 44 Time, the Priceless Commodity.

People say land is limited and precious, but you can still reclaim more land from the sea. Can you re-live your 8th birthday or bring back yesterday? When time is gone, it is gone forever. All the money in the world will not buy back yesterday; that is how priceless time is! 'Lost time cannot be recovered.' Benjamin Franklin said, 'Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.'

The wastage of time is therefore most costly and atrocious, and the fact that it is invisible makes it even more elusive! Time is here, it must be seized and cherished. The reputable Malcolm Forbes said: 'There's never enough time unless you use it.' Lord Chesterfield noted: 'The less one has to do, the less time one finds to do it in.' Even some 4,300 years ago, Ptahhotpe realised the importance of time when he suggested: 'Follow your desire as long as you live; do not lessen the time of following desire, for the wasting of time is an abomination to the spirit.'

Many people think of success as a product of cunning, luck and legacy. These are mere excuses for failures. If we were to scrutinise the amount of time we spent each day that was strictly goal-achieving, income-earning and future-building, we would be appalled! Alexander Woollcott commented, 'There is no such thing in anyone's life as an unimportant day.' A lifetime consists of years, months, days and minutes. If each day of our lives is progressive and productive, success is certain. What happens in our lives is directly related to the way we spend our days! How we manage our minutes and hours spells the difference between success and failure.

I have personally seen some achievers, who learned and accomplished more in 5 years than others did in 15 years! They outmatched others in promotion, salary and reward. See? Time may mean nothing to a stone but it is everything to a living person. Its great value depends on what we do while it is flying away. The German writer Goethe wrote: 'We have time enough if we will use it right.' Napoleon 1 said widely, 'Improve your opportunities. Every hour lost in youth is a chance of future misfortune.'

You have as much time as the greatest or richest person on earth, you are on

a par with him, isn't that most assuring? So do not overlook the importance of managing your life on an hourly and daily basis. If you are engrossed in the work you love, and you advance and enjoy every minute of the day, everyday of the year, you can imagine the level of your happiness and success. It will be enormous! Lord Chesterfield urged us: 'Take care of the minutes and the hours will take care of themselves.' I have better news for you, if you work an extra hour a day, strive to be more skilful and efficient, and do more in less time, you are even further ahead! In a way, you have created a 8-day week, and a 34-day month. The magnitude of your success will be even greater!

'Nine tenth of wisdom is being wise in time' Said the great Theodore Roosevelt. Time, like smoke or snowflake can disappear if you hesitate before action. The great Napoleon Hill rightly warned us: 'Life is a checker-board, and the player opposite you is Time. If you hesitate before moving, or neglect to move promptly, your men will be wiped off the board by time.' Paradoxically, time is what many of us need the most, yet use the worst. Mastery of time is therefore crucial for success and happiness. I will list here some tips for good time management:

**1. Reduce wasted time to zero.** Identify sources and incidents of wastage at school, at work and elsewhere, in the 24 hour context. Keep an audit of time in your diary with hourly slots, and record how you spent the week. You'll be surprised how much time you have frittered away! Find out where it went and why it did. Stop time-wasting activities like idling, watching non-beneficial TV programmes, and other fruitless pastimes. Instead, cultivate discipline, diligent habits and concentration. Invent some urgency for job-completion. Someone once said, 'Nothing makes a person more productive than the last minute.'

**2. Control and master your time fully.** Take creative and fruitful action always, instead of procrastinating. Plan specific job duties allowing reasonable time and deadlines. Set priorities. Retrieve information and perform tasks efficiently. Be tough with delays, distractions, negativism and politicking.

**3. Use your time and other people's time to your advantage.** Add hours to your life by working smarter, by getting more done in less time. If you can do something worth \$5 in 5 minutes why take an hour? For myself I always kill 2 birds with one stone. While the photocopier is warming up my computer is ticking away. As the soup is boiling, the frying pan is warming, my garlic is slicing...

Add more value to your time by doing higher value activities, and contracting low-value work to others. Delegate work to subordinates and win their support. The better you make use of your time, the higher the price and reward you will get for it. Once you have mastered time, you will be amazed how much you have been missing, and how much you have hidden your potentials.

Now let us sum up this chapter: Time should not just be spent, it should be invested or used to some purpose, and utilised for high productivity. Try to accomplish more in less time. Away from work, time is for learning, family, friendship, social contribution, health, exercise, resting and revival. There are only about 25,000 days in one's life; at age 20 you have 18,000 days left, tomorrow it will be 17,999! By then, today will be yesterday, and gone. So I beg you, do not waste a single minute of your time, treasure every moment of your life, whatever you have now, is your little but valuable portion of the wonderful universe! Grow healthier, wealthier and happier by the minute, and you will soon be a force to be reckoned with in the world, a source of pride and joy to our Almighty Creator.

"The ability to concentrate and make optimum use of time is vital for anyone who wants to succeed in business, as well as in almost any field." - Lee Iacocca, of Chrysler, American industrialist.

"My guiding principle has been to avoid putting things off for tomorrow." - Duke of Wellington.

"I live today as if it were my last...I would not waste a single moment of this day..." - Og Mandino, success guru and writer.

"Everything comes to the man who hurries while waiting." - Edison.

"A man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he has lost no time." - Bacon, 16th century statesman and philosopher.

## Chapter 45 Discipline.

If you were watching a performing star, like Martina Hingis on the tennis court, or Ronaldo on the soccer field, you would be inclined to say: 'I'd give everything to be able to play like you do.' And with some intelligence you could guess the reply, it would be: 'That's exactly what I did.' or 'No you wouldn't, if you would you'd be here playing like I do.'

Great skills and achievements can be deceptive because admiration leads us immediately to applaud the talent, brain and brawn, and to forget the practice, perseverance and pain behind it all. None of the champions sat, wishing and waiting for success. Most of them gave all they had, days and nights, months and years. Mark Spitz, who won 5 gold medals at the 1976 Olympics said, 'We all love to win but how many people love to train?' In one previous chapter, I stressed that talents are common, it is determination, will power, hard work and obsession that make the difference. The great German writer Goethe noted, 'He who is firm in will moulds the world to himself.'

In life there are multitudes of spectators, but few of Hingis and Ronaldo. It is obvious that great success is attained only by a few. They have desire and goals, that are strong enough to latch them on to the hard work that the others avoided doing! The others have moods, natural likes and dislikes, and want convenience and comfort. Thomas Huxley wrote, 'The most valuable trait... is the ability to make yourself do the things you have to do... whether you like it or not.' Discipline goes naturally with patience and perseverance, they are all vital ingredients for success. Many people want to succeed, but are not prepared to pay the price. Remember, we get what we work for or pay for! Victor Hugo, the famous French writer said, 'People do not lack strength, they lack will.' Plato the Greek philosopher wrote: 'The first and the best victory, is to conquer self.' George Washington noted: 'Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable, procures success to the weak, and esteem to all.' So now you can see, Success is something superior, something extra. It can only be achieved with superior discipline, and by going the extra mile.

This lesson is timely for those of you who are studying for exams, qualifying and graduating. This is the season for strong and silent discipline. It is

time to embrace the following points:

**1. Uproot Complacency.** Active and regimented people are happier people because they feel they are useful, purposeful and fulfilling their potential. They recognise that successful people have passion for results, while failures love comfort and the easy way out. Beware, even with success, love of comfort may lead to complacency and laziness.

**2. Self Denial.** Toil now, for doubled luxury later. Pain now, but more pleasure later. The idea is to get over with the work and the pain, the sooner the better! Achieving ahead of time is best, because the fruits of your labour can multiply. Delayed performance reduces the rewards because precious time is lost, while your competitors catch up!

**3. Get-Up-And-Go Power.** you should train yourself to rise immediately at the sound of the morning alarm-clock. With regular practice, this becomes an easy routine. The same goes for studying and working. Do not procrastinate, but get cracking, because action creates motivation. the quicker and more frequently you act, the better your motivation in the long term, and the greater your eventual accomplishment.

**4. Discipline Development and Habit Control.** It is delightful to note that discipline is self-feeding and self-reinforcing. A little lead to more, as the achievement and rewards become increasingly gratifying! This is a wonderful progression to have. Concurrently, good habits should be formed to replace and discard bad ones. Be a person in control of life; rather than a slave of bad habits. We are at our best mentally and physically, when we are disciplined and in control.

Connie Mack said, 'The first thing any man has to know, is how to handle himself.' Discipline does not end with punctuality and diligence, of course. It should extend beautifully to all forms of self-control. The control of fickle minds, loose tongues, ill manners, boastfulness, extravagance, damaging thoughts, and all facets of weaknesses and negativism are extremely important. Discipline gives value to our time, environment, lifestyle and character. One of our earlier scientists, Pythagoras said, 'No man is free who cannot command himself.' Tennyson put it rightly: 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, those three alone lead life to sovereign power.' Perhaps one of the most important areas of self-control is the capacity to be cool, calm and collected in all circumstances.

Milton said, 'Who reigns within himself, and rules passions, desires, and fears is more than a king.' Generally speaking, the louder a person shouts or bangs his table, the lower his intelligence and virtues. Likewise the man who can reason softly is many times more superior and respectable than the one who argues violently. The touchy and temperamental hooligan is avoided and the barbaric bully is despised wherever they go. These people have no more grace or intelligence than that of the baboons.

All those who exude maturity, confidence and tranquillity from their innate peace and contentment are liked and treasured everywhere. Let us grow up to be the kind of person who is valued and loved everywhere; always gentle, calm, optimistic, cheerful and in control.

"Don't permit yourself to show temper. Always remember that if you are right you can afford to keep your temper, and if you are wrong you cannot afford to lose it."  
- J. Reynolds.

"Responsibility walks hand in hand with capacity and power." - J. G. Holland.

"Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." - Will Rogers.

"Wisdom and discipline are what mere fools have despised." - Proverbs 1:7.

"People who are resting on their laurels are wearing them on the wrong end." - Anonymous.

"Five enemies to peace inhabit with us: avarice, ambition, envy, anger, and pride. If these enemies were to be banished, we should infallibly enjoy perpetual peace."  
- Petrarch.

## Chapter 46 The Power of a Peaceful Heart, Quiet Mind, and Winning Spirit.

The *Desiderata*, a famous piece of writing with great wisdom was found in a church in Baltimore, USA, 300 years ago. Its first line was: ‘Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.’ Similarly, the Hindu and Buddhist religions also seek peace and refuge, away from the maddening crowd. They recognise that in the noisy confusion of life, there are disenchanting relationships and human problems. One of the earlier chapters also discussed the importance of tranquillity, contentment and balance.

Successful people, prominent leaders, and especially the American presidents over the years, take retreats. Your nervous and spiritual system need a sanctuary away from the bustle and hustle to rest and recuperate; just as your body requires exercise and rest to let off tension and tiredness. Fatigue and emotional carry-overs can bring aggravation, problems, burn-outs or even accidents. Use moments of change and escapism to your great advantage and constantly build a quiet room in your mind, for prayer, power and progress. The 3 Ps!

Clearing the mind is an important step towards tranquillity. Erase all your doubts, fears, regrets, unpleasant memories and all negative traces, and replace them with healthy and pleasant thoughts. You can also recall past scenes and experiences of joy and victories. Supplement these with recollections of beautiful settings, blossom, music, mesmerising sunsets, starlit nights and magical moonlight. These will pacify and refresh your mind. Besides visual effects, verbal suggestions have similar impact on your subconscious. Use the CCPP formula and repeat to yourself: I am Calm and Confident, I have Power and Potential. It works, believe me.

Now that you are shining in school and preparing to step out into the world, it is time to re-empower you for long-term, confident living and top performance. The key is to advance in silence and serenity, in a subtle way. We all need time alone. In seclusion, we can exploit time further and gain extra grounds by fostering positive thoughts, renewal and progress; besides, many accomplishments need quietness and undivided concentration. It is crucial in your teenage years, that you learn to exploit the opportunities in solitude. Consequently, you will have some



mastery over your habits, mental routines and quality of life. From general experience, I think the real test of youngsters' capacity to use time alone is their ability to study their textbooks for extended periods, without running to the fridge, the TV, or the gossiping telephone!

Emerson assured us, 'Nothing can bring you peace but yourself.' Your real power must come from within. Your mind is your own and you solely manage your responses to everything that affects your life. You must therefore take special care of the inner you, and filter all your daily thoughts and experiences so that none of the poisonous matter sneak in or latch on.

As you attain greater inner peace, your filtration process improves and excels. You must also fortify yourself, to handle disappointment and rejection, accepting that life comes normally with these things. They must be taken as opportunities to rise to greater heights. Remember, a kite soars against the wind. There is no such thing as permanent defeat, all losses are temporary. They are only blessings in disguise because God works in wondrous ways. Forced changes often lead to greater opportunities and success! So press on, as soon as your obstacles are tackled and smothered, calm flows from within. Then, with some efforts, success won't be far away.

Following fortitude, gratitude is another force that beautifies your heart and mind. It is deeply spiritual, oozing graciousness, charity and charm. So make it your daily habit to give thanks to God for all your blessings, bearing in mind that things could have been a lot worse! Extend this thankfulness to your loved ones and others around you, you are more indebted to them than you realise. Gratitude brings contentment, and both will give marvellous new dimensions to your hidden powers and your life.

Silence, stillness and shelter develop magic in your mind and body. That is why animals can hibernate for months without food and warmth, and yogis can meditate to decrease their heartbeats and body temperatures. Serenity is always important because it is the sedate garden where seeds of greatness germinate. Calmness fosters concentration, vision, creativity, insight, strategy, accurate thinking, and enhances your mental and spiritual well-being. Here are good directions for you:

A peaceful heart is achieved in the following ways:

1. Ensure your life is in harmony with your values and principles.
2. Live a virtuous, guiltless life. Practice forgiveness. When you let go of resentment, revenge and regret, many weights are lifted.
3. Be hopeful. Anticipate good things, and work to deserve them.
4. Nurture gratitude, contentment, graciousness, goodwill and altruism.
5. Learn to accept things you cannot change. Learn to laugh at yourself. Maintain good health and freedom from worry and fear.

The following are pathways towards a powerful, quiet mind:

1. Give priority and appreciation to the power of serenity.
2. Pray often. Enjoy beauty, scenery, fresh air, soft music, and all good things that appeal to the senses. Avoid noise and chaos.
3. Acknowledge a problem; solve it quickly the best way you can.
4. Enjoy quiet progress in planning, relaxation, concentration, problem-solving, accurate thinking, creativity, foresight, etc.

A winning spirit is developed in the following manner:

1. Use a totally positive vocabulary to see and tackle all situations, and be completely confident and optimistic. Shun all negativism, with absolutely no fretting and grumbling.
2. Treat all problems as opportunities, find some humour in them.
3. Have cheerfulness, powerful self-image and faith in yourself.
4. Treat work as labour of love. Work and play.

Lest we forget, solitude is the golden opportunity for affirmation and visualisation! Champions and achievers in various areas practise imaging and mental rehearsals of their perfect performance. Sportsmen and athletes have been rehearsing for ages and swear by it. Even business leaders visualise, as confirmed by Charles Garfield in *Peak Performers*. When asked about imaging, these entrepreneurs said they did it, 'All the time. I just never knew it had a name.'

## Chapter 47 Getting the Job You Want.

In university days I worked part-time as a bartender, and resourcefully, I befriended various important people and company bosses. Each summer, a holiday job was always waiting for me! With qualifications, resourcefulness, ingenuity and friendliness, you should have little difficulty getting a job. It is often whom you know, not what you know that counts. Sometimes employment is just a phone call away! Anyone without a job is also capable of creating his own business, if he really wants to. For desperadoes, there is a fruitful approach that I never had to resort to: Offer to work for experience without pay, for a month or so. Before long, you've gained experience and skills, and you are hired!

**Plan your career carefully.** Your livelihood will evolve successfully if things are well considered and executed, with intelligent schedules, options and contingencies. My advice is:

1. Your 1st preference should be a career involving your talents, hobbies and interests. You will thrive in what you enjoy doing.
2. If you cannot do that initially, take on something related to your liking and talents, hopefully it will lead you back to your 1st-preference job.
3. If neither 1. nor 2. is available, take whatever comes, and gain general experience before 1 or 2 materialises. Alternatively, you might develop new interest and zeal in another field.

Confucius wrote: 'Choose a job that you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.' Passion in your work is vital, so you must identify your interests. Check which activities thrill you the most, and recall what courses you excelled in at school. Do you like working with people or computers, or numbers? What about nature, music, art or literature? Do you perform better under pressure or in quiet seclusion? Are you better suited to a salaried job, or a self-employed enterprise? To make the right decision, give thorough considerations to every aspect and possibility.

As early as possible, get rich exposure to the real commercial world, and seasonal jobs for students provide valuable hands-on experience. Wise parents should expose children to myriad career situations to broaden their horizon, and

leave the final career selections to them. A career is an evolving thing, and choices are adjustable. A job-change or mistake is sometimes the master stroke or blessing in disguise, despite the time lost along the way.

**You can get a good job in various ways.** My strong circle of friendship brought me almost all the jobs I landed over the years! I had advance news, got the interview and was hired before anyone knew anything. If a prospective employer likes you and your credentials enough, he will take you on and save all the hassles. Move ahead of others. You can get work through cold-calling, enquiries, vigilance and even creativity. If you are in a long queue waiting to be interviewed, pass a note to the Manager through his secretary saying: 'Please don't employ anyone until you have interviewed me, Mr...'. If she can't find the *Newsweek* in the shop downstairs for the boss, get one quickly! Your initiative will work wonders, believe me. In life, you simply have to get lucky in all kinds of situations, and make big impact with little chances. Even errors, accidents or a casual remark can lead to something big and rewarding. With patience and persistence, you can even clinch the exact job you want by targeting and scheming. With time, you will manoeuvre yourself into the door!

**Getting the interview.** This is your first step. You answer an advertisement or make an initiative approach. Your application letters and resumes (CV) must be faultless, and precisely what the recruiters want. Do homework on the companies, this will attune your letters and CVs to the requirements and climate of those establishments. Scrutinise your papers from the employer's point of view. Are you deserving the interview? You must sell yourself without overselling, and impress without overkill. The application letter should preferably be only a page, brief and to the point, indicating your interest and suitability for the post and accentuating selling points not prominent in the resume. Needless to say, the lay-out, length, lettering, content, flow of information, vocabulary, style, grammar must be excellent and second to none.

The resume is a set of facts on who you are and what you have done, and should display the following: 1. Name and contact address. 2. Objectives and the job reference. 3. Education and qualifications. 4. Work experience. 5. Other personal data, like age, marital status, affiliations, awards, etc. 6. References. With many applicants and contestants, any fault or weakness in your papers will quickly disqualify you, so it pays to check and improve your letters and CVs

exhaustively, and make them top-notch.

**Make thorough preparation for the interview.** I have interviewed hundreds of candidates over the years and learned that the winning edge is small on many occasions. Extra preparation can determine success or failure. Have you found out more about the company, its markets, and its people? Have you done more research and have you prepared yourself for all possible questions? Your readiness tells on your character, attitude and upcoming performance. Rehearse and visualise a successful interview several times the night before. Practice perfects a performance!

Dress smartly and suitably for the job, and remember, first impressions are lasting impressions. Ensure that everything about you is neat and clean. Your image determines your worth. You should review your resume; your certificates and awards should be kept in a clean display folder for easy inspection. Set out and arrive early with a comfortable margin for unforeseen delays. This allows you time to settle down into a good mental state, see more of that company, and harmonise with the surrounding.

**A successful interview.** As far as possible, shake hands when you enter, and leave. Be matured and respectful, confident yet relaxed, enthusiastic but calm, upright yet comfortable. Listen carefully with sincere eye contact. Think briskly before answering a question intelligently, honestly and politely. Speak distinctly with good English, and without talking too much. Avoid artificiality, bragging, debates, and criticism of current or previous employers. A selfish attitude and thirst for financial gain is also detrimental. If asked about your weaknesses, mention those that ‘mirror’ your assets, such as excessive energy, impatience and ‘moving too fast’. Enhance your compatibility with the prospective job in a truthful way. Make a difference and stand out from all the other contestants. Send the interviewers a thank-you letter after the meeting. You should read more books and articles about skills in job search and interviews; reading and preparation pay.

For those who fail to land in the next job, here are words of consolation and encouragement: Look for a better position where you are now. View everyday as a new beginning, and prosper in your acre of diamonds. It is still possible to progress in one company, all the way to retirement.

## Chapter 48 Job-Loving and Job-Survival.

A job is an entire career at its present state, where we work for incomes, achievements, and the resultant good life. The quality of our lives depends on the values of our little daily accomplishments. Here is where we often take the most important things in life for granted. How can we treat our career, a precious livelihood, so lightly? Its gravity is beyond any doubt and needs little emphasis.

The importance of job-loving needs little emphasis too. Charles d'Emerson said, 'It is impossible to do anything well without pleasure.' When we love what we are doing, we do well, and end up with joy and satisfaction. Experts found that less stress and fatigue were suffered when work was enjoyed, and people could go a long way before exhaustion sets in. K. Gibran wrote: 'Work is love made visible.' The great entrepreneur, Mr Charles Schwab put it aptly: 'The man who does not work for the love of work, but only for money is neither likely to make money nor to find much fun in life.' Another great success celebrity Oprah said, 'I am where I am not because money was ever... my motivation.'

How do you love your job then? You simply have to set goals, stir up a burning desire, and motivate yourself. Find the functions that you enjoy doing, and persuade the company to let you shine in them. A job can be considered a game to be played skilfully under existing rules. Enjoy work as play; yet you must separate work from play in a special way, for greater focus and performance. Mind you, your efforts and even your free time will be fruitless and disappointing, unless you take charge of yourself. On the contrary, if you relish your undertakings and your leisure, we will find life more meaningful and fulfilling. A line in the *Desiderata* reads: 'Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.'

To love your job, love your colleagues; the human spirit embraces the work place. Many people overlook the importance of co-workers, forgetting that joy and fun can exude from them, as well as infectious enthusiasm, delight, energy and humour. Love and care for your colleagues. Overlook their weaknesses, and instead, look for their qualities and capitalise on them.

Another secret of job success is to get off to a fast start and consolidate your career quickly. Create a winning mystique early in the game. As I said in Chapter

44, there were people, who in 5 years achieved more than what others did in 15 years. Energise yourself, learn quickly, and outperform your peers. Learn from the beaver and the mosquito. The beaver builds dams and tunnels happily throughout the night; the mosquito bites hard and then sings! Be creative, pioneer better methods, and increase your visibility. For long-term advancement, go sideways if necessary; learn about other departments too and become valuable to your company. Remember Lazy Jim, in Chapter 30?

Among job survival techniques, attitude comes first and is reflected in your performance. This is where your moral sense, values, goals, and motivation take off. Integrity is vital, it includes honesty, reliability, responsibility and loyalty, which enhance your character and boost your long-term commercial worth.

Secondly, Have you got drive? Can you do more than required and do better than others? Be dedicated, or rather, dead-icated! E. Hubbard said, 'People who never do any more than they're paid to do are never paid for any more than they do.'

Thirdly, the ability to get along well with others is also essential in keeping a job. Do maintain the best office etiquette and protocol, and never make anyone feel slighted. Remain cool, calm, and courteous at all times, even under trying conditions. Co-operate with others and be a team-player. Help your co-workers as much as you can; in this way, you empower them and they will strengthen you in return. Cultivate, recognise, and care for those below you. Be the respectful, considerate and likeable person, who is sensitive to the feelings and needs of others. Avoid gossips and politicking. Stick to facts; reason and discuss things intelligently and solve problems objectively.

Fourthly, promote your company's products and services, and uphold its good corporate image. Lastly, be flexible and adaptable. Apart from these important points, other rules for survival are obvious; use your intelligence and common sense.

Getting along with your boss is the most important ingredient in keeping and advancing your job. Here are 6 vital points:

1. Listen attentively to your superior, not just to what he says but also to what he implies; take notes if necessary. Follow his objectives and his instructions, and if anything is questionable, bring it up courteously.

2. Accentuate his qualities, strength, performance and image. Make him look good, even if you have to let him take the credit for something you have done or conceived. Cover his mistakes. Help him to succeed in both obvious and subtle ways. Give him advance information (especially for company meetings), instead of outshining him! When he progresses, you progress too.
3. Ease and uncomplicate your boss's life. Solve your own problems. Be a bearer of good news, and be concise. Put accent on the positive: 'setbacks' and 'obstacles' are only 'challenges'.
4. Be a crucial and indispensable subordinate. Always go the extra mile, and volunteer for dirty or delicate assignments. Get your name on projects.
5. Be loyal, be trustworthy and a confidante. Share accomplishments, ideas, opportunities, options and alternatives with him. Introduce him to important people.
6. Maintain excellent relationship with his secretary and family.

This lesson will be incomplete without an awareness for contingencies, after all, life is not a bed of roses. The first question that comes to mind is: What if you cannot love your job? I think this is a problem of values and attitude. One universal weakness is that at work, people hanker for amusement and leisure. They fail to realise that everyone must work to earn his holidays, and that all pleasures have their saturation points. Their fun will begin to wear off on the 3rd week of a vacation, and they will miss home and work. Life needs a good balance and mixture of everything. Besides, too much relaxation will lower your self-esteem because you do not feel organised and useful. Marden wrote: 'No matter how humble your work may seem, do it in the spirit of an artist, of a master. In this way you lift it out of commonness and rob it of what would otherwise be drudgery.'

You need to have dreams, and set goals for your present job; then you can form strategies and manoeuvre yourself in a powerful way. Think of stepping-stones and all possibilities, including vertical and horizontal channels for progress, and even success outside of work! It is said that you cannot succeed in a difficult task, unless you take pleasure in doing it. So instead of sitting around and moaning, enjoy your work or do something. Act, create, and make things happen. Change your attitude to work and people and things will change towards you.

A bigger hurdle is the economic and career downswing that you may meet somewhere along your life-long career. My advice to you is: **Any setback,**



**bounce back!** You can do this, by adapting to hardship and changes in technology and economics. Remember, **problems create opportunities**. Gather all the ingenuity, skills, and courage at your disposal and proceed. With unfaltering self-image, perseverance, optimism, humour and so on, you can weather the storm and emerge victorious again. I will discuss setbacks in greater details later. In the meantime, before any downturn, move to solidify your career base. Start wielding knowledge and skills to take you to greater heights in the corporate ladder, and I will teach you these techniques soon.

My concluding remark is: There is no future in a job, the future lies you; everything depends on you! How can you allow your loved ones, your home, your abilities and skills to lose their charm and dwindle away? Life is precious, hold on tightly to your career. Go to work tomorrow and act as if it was your first day on a new job, it will be the first day of the rest of your life too!

"If you have a job without aggravations, you don't have a job." - Forbes.

"If you work for a man, in heaven's name work for him! If he pays you wages that supply your bread and butter, work for him, stand by him, and stand by the institution he represents." - E. Hubbard.

"The fruit derived from labour is the sweetest of all pleasures." - Vauvenargues.

"A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best." - Emerson.

"Every person gets his pleasure from the instrument he plays best." - Henri-Rene Lenormand.

## Chapter 49 Good Organisation, Methods and Efficiency.

Recently, I walked into 2 different Asian bakery shops. The first one had the usual variety of filled buns, which were unlabelled, and I had to ask what was this and that. The shopkeeper went through the array of butter buns, cream buns, bean-paste buns, jam buns, coconut buns, pork buns... As I paid for them, I said to the wide-eyed girl: 'Have you never thought of labelling them?' The second shop had all the items labelled, but different buns were priced at 25c, 30c, 35c, 40c, 45c.... When I took a dozen of different items, she was without a calculator or cash register, and was in a fix! 'Have you never thought of uniform prices? Makes life easier.' I said. What a contrast to the efficiency, flow and success at McDonald's and KFC!

Successful living requires organisation and orderliness. A Chinese proverb warns us: 'Begin with an error of an inch and end with a thousand miles off the mark.' This is too true in modern-day space expeditions! In whatever we do, both at home and at work, good plans, priorities, arrangements, lay-outs, systems, and even long term considerations, all contribute to performance. The time and energy of workers and machines, wisely or wastefully used, determine the profits or losses of a business. Careful planning and efficient systems spell victory. To cite an example, whenever the Singapore Changi International airport makes a building extension, it fits beautifully into the overall scheme of things, and will do so for decades to come. Everything was well thought out, with foresight. The Airport is rated as one of the best in the world. On the other hand, the massive traffic jams in Asian cities, and the absence of congestion in many American, Canadian and Australian ones, they all speak for themselves.

In any factory, workshop or office, the lay-out and arrangement of departments, rooms, space, machinery, furniture, tools, supplies and production processes must be ingeniously and exhaustively studied and implemented. The same goes for various work-flow, connections, communications, incoming and outgoing movements. This maximises productivity and well-being, while boredom, stress, wastage, accidents, etc, are minimised. In addition, changing technologies, contingencies and future developments must be considered and provided for.

At work, I cannot stand people wandering around for a pair of scissors. I reminded my staff of several things:

1. Whatever you use the most should be nearest to you, this reduces time and efforts.
2. Always find a better or easier way to do something.
3. Return everything exactly to its pre-assigned position for easy retrieval; this includes a good filing system.
4. Equip yourselves with all the necessary tools and stationery.
5. Harmonise and integrate a total system, stand back and look at the whole picture, and the future.
6. Keep tidy. Often, the most important piece of office equipment is the waste-paper basket!

Efficiency means producing with minimum costs and efforts. The ideal office or factory must be a pleasant, work-assisting environment. It should not impede work or intrude, it should 'free' the worker to concentrate and excel in his job. Temperature, lighting, colour schemes, noise control and flow of activities must be carefully and cleverly engineered, with 'forms following functions'. Good systems must extend to equipment, stationery, operating procedures, formats, communications, streamlining of processes, and the intelligent and fair distributions of workloads. As far as possible, all tasks performed, especially those of factory workers, must be analysed for energy and time-saving. Good organisation and methods bring: Simplification, ease, efficiency, cost reduction, better communication, proper controls, decrease in errors and defects, decline in personal overtone and politics, greater safety and security, fairer allocation of duties, objective evaluation of performance, use of modern technology and equipment, better company image and prestige, and most important of all, improved climate, well-being and overall performance.

System is part of the universe; the rising sun, the budding trees, the falling leaves... Let us not stray from this law of nature. The successful person is disciplined and systematic, he organises tasks, budgets time and expenses, and he works with total efficiency. He does this with full utility of his God-given abilities and potentials. Get organised now and be excellent and productive. Believe me, no one drifts or gropes his way to success.

## Chapter 50 Being Initiative and Going the Extra Mile.

I can never forget 2 incidents, told by Mr Napoleon Hill in his book *The Master Key to Riches*. The first event took place some 80 years ago, when Mr Charles Schwab (One of America's great industrialists) arrived in his private rail-car, at a station near one of his steel mills in Pennsylvania, USA. On this early frosty morning, he was surprised by the greeting of a young lad with a notebook. The youth introduced himself as a clerk named Williams; he had seen the telegram and had rushed there voluntarily, hoping to take some instructions or run some errands. No one had sent him, and obviously he was keen to offer extra service without pay.

That night, young Mr Williams was on the train with Mr Schwab to New York City, brought along to be one of his assistants! The youngster's career grew from strength to strength and years later, he went on to become the president and a large shareholder, in one of America's giant pharmaceutical companies.

The second incident involved an old lady who walked into a store in Pittsburgh, USA, years ago. She appeared to be loitering, waiting for the rain to stop. Shop assistants ignored her, but a young clerk greeted her and brought her a chair. Later, when the rain stopped, he escorted her to the street and bade her good-bye. That old lady turned out to be the mother of Andrew Carnegie! (Another great American industrialist who donated his vast fortune in the early 1900s.) She returned to Scotland, contacted this young man, gave him substantial business, and eventually made him a partner in a company.

I could go on with more stories, but believe me, the world abounds with such happenings, and I have seen some myself. Even in Asia, some of the wealthiest magnates were ordinary businessmen who, in their younger days, served and impressed their superiors, benefactors or national leaders. It really pays to be initiative and to go the extra mile! The reason for such rewards is obvious. By giving more than usual, you get ahead of others, you get a raise or promotion, and you win customers, revenues, personal or public favour.

Where your gains are less tangible or immediate, don't be discouraged. The great R. W. Emerson said, 'If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid.' The natural law of

compensation will reward you in other ways later, and God will see to that. Moreover, you are gaining experience in the process. Always give people more than they expect, and do it cheerfully; you have nothing to lose. Going the extra mile puts you miles ahead of your competitors and the common crowd. Napoleon Hill said, 'If a man performs no more service than that for which he is paid, then obviously he is receiving all the pay for which he is entitled.' Regine, wealthy and influential, said: 'I learned fast that you get nothing for nothing.' So work hard, but work intelligently, and remember too, to pause and 'sharpen the saw.'

Colonel Sanders is another example. Before he built the giant KFC network, he worked in a petrol station. He recalled: 'Sometimes I didn't finish working until 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning. Then I opened again at 5 a.m. Most gas stations didn't open until 7, and I sold more gas between 5 and 7 in the morning than the other stations sold all day.'

The renowned inventor Edison said, 'I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work.' Great inventors didn't leave their marks in history without the ability to 'get cracking'. Entrepreneurs who built huge successes took initiative, and made things happen along their paths. Workers who reached the pinnacles of giant corporations wouldn't have got there without giving that extra touch and service. A salesman who sees 3 extra prospects a day always reaps some extra rewards. No job big or small, could be done without someone lifting a finger. Charles Dickens reminded us too: 'This is a world of action, not for droning in.'

There you are, you can think positive thoughts and read books on success all your lives, you can study and get your Masters and Doctorate, you can have vast knowledge and contacts, but you will never get anywhere, until you **take initiative and act**.

If you want to get somewhere, don't be any of the 2 kinds of people who would never succeed: One will not do what he is told, and the other will not do anything more than he is told! Often these people procrastinate and blew their chances and precious time away. Procrastination is a paralysing habit, curable only by personal initiative and action. The *Lazy Jim* story was a fine example of these, which led to success.

The world is teeming with accomplishments that sprouted from creative ideas and seizures of opportunities. The ideal time doesn't exist or wait around for

you, it is just an excuse for laziness. If you want to succeed, the ideal time is **now**, this very minute. People who got ahead knew this; they could always find the opening and the time to take initiative, make things happen and advance themselves. They did this while others were waiting, sleeping, or complaining: 'We just didn't have the time.'

With all the above, need I say more? Have I not changed your mind and touched your heart? My departing words to you are: Your welfare will not improve if you do nothing about it. In life, do not wait for your ship to come in, row out to meet it!

"Things may come to those who wait, but only things left by those who hustle." - Abraham Lincoln.

"Things don't turn up in this world until somebody turns them up." - Garfield.

"With will-power, ideas and a willingness to work two hours longer than others, it is not difficult to make money." - Bernard Brochard.

"The average man dedicates 25% of his energy to work. The world rewards the person who gives more than 50%, and does anything for those rare individuals who give 100%." - Andrew Carnegie.

"While one person hesitates because he feels inferior, the other is busy making mistakes and becoming superior." - Henry C. Link.

"The initiative of a mere minority has yielded unparalleled results. What tremendous horizons loom if we fully develop the initiative of the majority!" - L. P. Shield.

## Chapter 51 Excellent Performance.

You should have seen the sparkle in Andre Agassi's eyes and his handsome smile on TV last week, as he lifted the champion's trophy after a major tournament. The sight fascinated me, as always. In less than a year in 1995 he has zoomed from the tennis world's No.14 to No.1. Winning and being on top of the world is sheer ecstasy. I had a similar experience, when I remained first in class right through primary school. I enjoyed the reign in a way beyond description. Top students are loved and adored like heroes everywhere, especially by their teachers and parents. It is fantastic.

Most of you are probably still in college, where grades are important and they lead to satisfying careers. Here, I will first impart to you the secrets of excelling in school:

**1. A prolific use of time.** Many straight-A students also shine in sports, head debating teams, the choir or the science society. Their productive time contrasts vividly with that of the low-ranking students, through good organisation, clever scheduling and exploitation of time. At study time, TV and phones are shut out. Schooling is business, and business precedes pleasure. They study everywhere and seize every learning opportunity. They would learn a new word or medical term while tooth-brushing or sitting in the toilet! Each minute is progressive and no time is wasted in procrastinating or hunting for a lost ruler or pencil. Every minute is organised and fruitful. Try that!

**2. Keeping abreast and even ahead of teachers.** The super-achiever arouses his own burning interest and has 100% focus, curiosity and understanding on everything taught. If he misses a little, he catches up swiftly. He studies right after school when the text is still fresh in his mind. He even outruns the teacher by grasping a lesson before a class. Imagine the miserable student, who panics and struggles to understand concepts and formulas on the eve of the examination. Too late!

**3. Adroit tackling of class projects and exam papers.** The top-student ploughs through rich and relevant library materials to raise his papers to superlative levels. He not only breaks complex tasks into manageable pieces, he prioritises them on importance and urgency. He tests himself extensively on all possible exam

questions. When the day comes, he exerts his prowess with all faculties clicking. Just visualise the other student, nervously spending an hour on a 10-mark question then the last 10 minute on a 40-mark one! Pathetic.

**4. Good reading habits and skills.** The super-scholar reads abundantly, analytically and selectively for useful and applicable information, with speed-reading and digesting skills.

**5. Excellent note-taking and memory.** Later, notes are shortcut to recap, complete understanding and memory, allowing the recall of a string of important facts and figures. Memory skills are used to the full.

**6. Good overall image and human relationship.** The best student presents well, not only his looks, but his paperwork and speeches. He does it in the best taste, packaging, style, contents with overall psychological consideration! He speaks up and asks questions, not just for show, but to leave all darkness and doubts behind him. He communicates and articulates beautifully. If he pales beside others he takes speech and drama lessons or even joins the Toastmasters' Club. He studies socially too, not to gossip but to explore new ideas, approaches and solutions; furthermore, he gains other information that he overlooked or missed, and more knowledge too! He is courteous and wins the constant support of his parents and teachers. Every teacher keeps track of conduct and activities, and gives the grade, remember?

**7. Diligence and going the extra mile.** The high achiever does more than asked, knowing that learning through practising leads to excellence. He works hard, but he works smart. Research has shown that the top pupil often spends no more time than the bottom one, who often stares at a book that glares blankly at him.

**8. Discipline is paramount.** So are concentration and perseverance. If you run to scavenge the frig every 20 minutes, frequent the TV, and loiter in the shopping centre, think of the consequences.

**9. Powerful desire, goals, drive and love for winning.** The winner-student has all of these. Winning is heaven on earth - I can't help saying it again and again. Now, is it that difficult to be a top student?

It is not just students and individuals, nations are winning too. Nowadays many good products are Japanese. Sony, Canon, Toyota, etc, are as familiar as the sun. Similarly, many quality cars and tools are German; Mercedes, BMW, Porsche



and Audi need no introduction. In just 30 years Japan and Germany rose from their massive destruction and defeat in the 2nd World War like phoenixes from ashes, to become major economic and technical powers. Together with Switzerland, USA and a few others, they enjoy the highest per capita incomes in the world - over US\$20,000 - while poor countries are struggling with US\$200! Why? You may say it is a combination of capital, human and natural resources, but prosperous countries like Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore have little natural resources. Watch how the Japanese people live and work. Superior attitude, discipline, resourcefulness and perseverance work wonders. It is not accident or luck. This all boils down to one thing: Excellent performance.

Why do people scrape by in bare, lifeless existence while others live rich, charitable and fulfilling lives? My answer is: **Give the best to the world and the best will come to you.** Few people do their best, and we have the golden opportunity to outshine them! The British writer S. Maugham said, 'It's a funny thing about life; if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it.' The American football coach V. Lombardi had the best answer: 'The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavour.' Excellent performance sways the largest conglomerates, down to the tiniest cafes! Recently I savoured 2 eateries in town. The first one was packed with customers. True enough, the food, service and pricing were superb. The second restaurant was only next door; but it did not get the spill-over of diners and was quite deserted. The waitresses seldom showed up or responded to signals. One dish had too much chilli, despite my pre-request. The mud-crabs were uncooked, so I asked for re-cooking. Later, I had to gulp down diarrhoea pills when I got home. There are hundreds of restaurants in town and I need not return to them. It is sad that many people still do not recognise 2 things: That they don't always get a second chance, and that they don't get something for nothing. Memorise these 2 lines!

God inclines us to take pride in our work. Nothing tastes as good as our own cooking, as the fish we caught and the vegetables we grew! The desire for victory and the joy of winning are God-given qualities too. Entrepreneurs and corporate-climbers would do well to emulate the fighting spirit of sports champions. Two respected coaches commented fittingly. B. Bryant said: 'What matters is not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of fight in the dog.' V. Lombardi noted:

‘You don’t win once in a while, you don’t do things right once in a while, you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing.’ Winning is habitual and fun; now let me usher you into victories:

**1. Have purpose, objectives and dreams.** Then set goals and stir up your desire, enthusiasm and commitment to pursue them. Do this in all forms of endeavours in sports, schooling, self-employment, services to employers and customers. As far as possible, get a job you love. W. A. Foster said: ‘Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skilful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.’

**2. Concentration is crucial for peak performance.** This is so vital that I wrote an essay on Focus, please read Chapter 42.

**3. Perseverance and practice will perfect performance.** Remember these 4 Ps for all your tasks. Physical practice is vital; so is mental practice, which is not daydreaming, it is deliberate and precise visualisation and rehearsal, as used by champions.

**4. Get results first, perfection later.** You can be so obsessed with perfection that you never get something completed. Take one step at a time and make little improvements. Cardinal Newman noted: ‘A man would do nothing if he waited until he could do it so well that no one could find fault.’ Work on something first, improve from experience then strive for excellence with the least errors and defects. Henry Beecher, the great lecturer said: ‘Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anyone else expects of you. Never excuse yourself.’

**5. Keep improving.** Compete with yourself and raise your standards. Identify all the things you no longer accept in your life, as well as those you are now yearning to achieve. Do everything better than you did before, it adds to creativity too! Remember, one of life’s challenges is that everything can be done better. Most products are being improved around the world.

**6. Work hard but work even smarter.** When you reach physical limits, exploit your mental and internal resources. Don’t forget your subconscious powers! Unlock your self-esteem and self-actualisation.

**7. Reward yourself along the way.** Always hold out a carrot for your achievement. Whenever you reach your target, buy yourself something! Rewards inspire you to work harder. They empower you and boost your performance

further. Start that exciting upward spiral!

**8. All-round good health, vitality, energy and creativity.** These are important, so are beliefs, self-image and confidence.

As you reach higher planes of success, your capacities for distinction should be more sophisticated with: A high level of drive; a competent mind against problems, that responds objectively and effectively; abilities to originate and communicate ideas; skills in empowering people; a knack for organising and running large projects, and the aptitude for leadership and greatness. Dream greater dreams and aim higher, there is always room at the top; the bottom is crowded with the dull and ordinary. Do your best, they say the wind and waves are always behind the best sailors; and above all, excellence gives dignity, character, beauty, meaning, fulfilment and richness to our lives.

“Believe in the best, think your best, study your best, have a goal for the best, never be satisfied with less than the best, try your best, and in the long run things will turn out for the best. Always add up the best.” - Henry Ford.

“If you must be a servant, serve the rich; if you must be a dog, be a temple dog.” - Laotian proverb.

“Most people know what ingredients are necessary for success. The only problem is that they are not ready to pay the price.” - Rich Port.

## Chapter 52 Climbing the Ladder of Success.

In this world, many people began at the bottom and remained there, others started low and went right to the top. The Chairman of a Malaysian bank for example, was once only a bank clerk, and he sold his shares 3 years ago for a few hundred million U.S. dollars! The popular Sugarbun chain appears to be matching McDonald's and KFC in many parts of Malaysia, because it does everything deliciously and perfectly. It was sold for millions of U.S. dollars recently, and the founder had started as a bakery worker only some 15 years ago! In Hong Kong, a newspaper boy Mr Harilela ended up with a big business empire. I heard too that in USA, a petrol station attendant went on to become the top man in a big oil company! These people progressed daily, while others slept.

You have probably just started your career, and you will commence now your steady climb of the corporate pyramid. Put your best foot forward now and achieve, and use every opportunity to prove you deserve a higher position. Eventually you will reach the pinnacle and even own your own business. You cannot climb the ladder of success with hands in your pockets. Sometimes this ladder is more like the slippery pole that firemen use for sliding down swiftly. Nevertheless, your will-power and determination always find their way, and I know you will grind and file this slippery pole down, to get your grip. The techniques of soaring into the corporate clouds are ironically, down to earth! There are no mysteries about them. Here are the 10 keys:

**1. Your value to the company.** Research has shown that among those who reached the top, the largest percentage were financial (30%) and marketing men (25%). So sales, profitability and financial control are vital areas in business. The best-rewarded worker is the one who brings ideas, progress, profits and well-being; his salary strives to keep up with his great value! All over the world, experts who turn huge enterprises around from losses to profits are lavishly paid. Your employers are human and they desire to prosper just like you do. If you help them succeed, they will help you in the same way too. Enhance your worth with the qualities listed below:

**2. Your visibility.** Can you get a promotion or raise if you are not even seen or remembered? Your character, abilities and accomplishments must shine

consistently, and be recognised.

**3. Resourcefulness and initiative.** Resourcefulness means you will use all available resources to solve problems and accomplish things. Use the creativity I taught you before. How can a job be done more efficiently, a product be made better to increase profits? Remember Lazy Jim? Success stories like his abound. Never say you have bitten off more than you can chew. Chew it or get people to chew it for you! Being initiative means always making good interaction, involvement, inputs, innovations and improvements without being told. Stay positive, and do not be discouraged if your ideas and efforts are not appreciated. Welcome criticism and extra duties. You must, on a daily basis, continuously find or invent better methods to advance yourself and your company. Become valuable!

**4. Undertake difficult responsibilities and assignments.** A sure way to success is to do more and go farther than others. If you are just average and show little concern for the company's welfare, you do not deserve extra rewards. Let hardship strengthen you. If you can make good decisions, shoulder bigger responsibilities, complete tough assignments and tackle challenges for the firm, you will go far.

**5. Interpersonal capacity, harmony and teamwork.** Lee Iacocca, the great American entrepreneur said, 'One of the main reasons why many people do not advance in their careers is the problems they have working well with their colleagues.' It is of supreme importance that you cultivate and enrich your subordinates, your peers, your bosses and even the higher-ups. Support and empower them as much as you can and your blessing will return tenfold. Remember too, that to be humble to superiors is a duty; to subordinates, nobility. Ensure that all your ideas and actions are positive, so that they benefit everyone. You should never advance at the expense of others, if you do you may succeed temporarily but not conclusively, believe me. The great Henry Ford said, 'The secret of success - if there is one - is the ability to put yourself in another person's shoes, and to consider things from his or her point of view.' Sensitivity and empathy are essential, and your office etiquette and mingling skills must be second to none. By the way, gossips and loose tongues are huge pitfalls, avoid them.

**6. Enthusiasm, health, vitality and drive.** Your hunger for excellence and your high level of thrust will propel you to success. Your impetus and diligence are blessings, not only to yourself, but to your co-workers and the company, because

enthusiasm is contagious, so is the lack of it. Love your work and your work-mates.

**7. Compatibility with the company, loyalty and dedication.** Share the same objectives with your employers and see things through their eyes. Be reliable, adaptable, obliging and faithful. Good conduct and image must radiate from you. Elevate the firm's reputation, promote its products and services and flow with the corporate spirit.

**8. Information, knowledge, skills and experience.** Information and knowledge are powerful. Seize every opportunity for learning, training and growing, both within and outside your department. Sparkle with knowledge at work, and increase progressively your skills and experience. Adorned with these, you are a fountain of knowledge and wisdom, a powerhouse of competence and abilities.

**9. Courage, wisdom, maturity, foresight and leadership.** Cultivate these superior qualities, they groom you for greater offices in the days ahead. Build the executive and leadership mentality. Think of efficiency, lower costs, increased sales and profits.

**10. Character, integrity and ethics.** Honesty is not only imperative but noble. It beautifies your character, glorifies your life and helps keep your job too. The lack of integrity has ruined many careers; gain respect and trust instead. Sincerity and genuine dedication are vital, and none of the falsehood and apple-polishing can culminate in lasting success. Benjamin Franklin said, 'Well done is better than well said.' However, my concluding words here are: If you perform excellently and earn more for those below and above you, your rise will be inevitable, and don't forget all those who were holding the ladder while you were climbing to the top!

## Chapter 53 Empowering Others.

Once I boarded a bus where the driver greeted everyone, cracked jokes frequently, and whistled nostalgic tunes like *The Happy Wanderer* and *Over the Rainbow*. The busload of complete strangers started smiling and talking to each other. Think of the wonderful environment and good life he has made for himself and others. The impact is not only immediate and deep, but remembered for a lifetime. Words and actions may take a second, but they last forever. If we could make others feel enlivened and honoured, we could work miracles. If we could empower everyone we meet, the world would be a different place.

Human relationships fill our entire lives and determine our success and happiness. Everyone, including our parents, brothers, sisters, spouses, colleagues, and those we come into contact with, should be treated as a hero, a star and someone special deserving respect. Let us see value, potential and greatness in people beyond their imperfections. After all, everyone is unique and has a contribution to make. This fresh attitude and approach to human interaction will bring strength, support, growth and fulfilment for each other. Surprisingly, we can empower people with very little effort. It is a wonderful way of touching their lives and they will enrich us in return. This is done by making them feel wanted and treasured; those who feel worthless are convinced they are priceless instead. In this world, countless relationships have been redeemed by the inflow of new thoughts and outlook. The following are important points, etch them in your memory:

**Thoughts, words and actions can work wonders.** You can empower people just by saying a few words, or even through kind, loving thoughts! Try it and you will believe me. My own experiences have amazed me. I need not give real life examples here; I want you to discover for yourself. You can practically turn nasty persons into nice ones, foes into friends, and devils into angels. A few lines said or written can inspire and energise people, brighten a day, or even change someone's life! A person's greatest need is to be appreciated. A pat on the back or a word of praise is never a waste, and seldom out of place; it brings a smile to a weary face and gives people greater zest. Even a word of encouragement means so much to those who are striving to do their best. I have said it in rhymes!

The reputable Mr Charles Schwab said, ‘I consider my ability to arouse enthusiasm in people as my most precious capital asset. It is by encouraging and uplifting an individual that you can awaken and develop his best qualities.’ Han Suyin noted, ‘There is nothing stronger in the world than gentleness.’ Over the years, Mr George Bush wrote an endless stream of cordial short notes to numerous people he dealt with. If that could help him to become the president of the US, it could help you to go places!

**People hunger for respect, recognition and the feeling of importance.** Treat people as unique individuals with needs for recognition and fulfilment. Dr M. A. Carrera said, ‘To feel valued and nurtured can change the course of a life.’ Mary Kay Ash of the giant cosmetic company reflected, ‘Whenever I meet someone, I try to imagine him wearing an invisible sign that says: *Make me feel important!* I respond to this sign immediately, and it works wonders.’ People are stimulated when they are appreciated; they feel they are doing a terrific job, something valuable and fruitful. Research has shown that students who were told they had done well in the previous test, went on to do better than those who were not congratulated. Dale Carnegie said, ‘There’s only one way under the high heaven to get anybody to do anything... And that is by motivating the other person to want to do it.’

**Love is a great healer on this planet.** People are invigorated and vitalised when you cheer them up, care for them and love them. We all need affection, warmth and a boost every now and then. Nelson Rockefeller, the American statesman reminded us, ‘Never forget that the most powerful force on earth is love.’ Show concern and empathy for people’s feelings and difficulty; without being overbearing, of course. Be sincere and simple. James M. Barrie urged us, ‘Always be a little kinder than necessary.’ Love to a human being is indeed like sunlight to a plant, and praise is rain to a desert.

**People have sensitivity and needs.** We motivate people best and change them when we know and fulfil their needs, values and priorities. Lest we forget, we are sensitive creatures; easily slighted and offended. When we’re hurt, we’re resentful; when we’re happy, we radiate joy. Unpleasant people must therefore be understood and forgiven. Be kind to them, they’re fighting life’s tough battles.

**A person tends to become what he is expected to be.** His development responds to expectation and treatment from others. His confidence and self-image



are continuously being shaped since infancy. If you groom him like a champion, he will perform well, but if you repeatedly tell him he is an idiot, he will soon believe it! Such self-fulfilling prophecy is called the Pygmalion Effect.

In life, you will never achieve much without the help and support of others. Life is short, strive to make others and yourself happy. When you make others feel good, you feel good too. Millions of lives sink into failure and sadness, all because people are waiting for the world to change towards them, without wanting to change themselves. They do not realise that they only get something in return for what they put in; otherwise, they get nothing for nothing!

The way you treat society will be the way society treats you. The great success teacher Og Mandino told us, 'Beginning today, treat everyone you meet as if they were going to be dead by midnight. Extend to them all the care, kindness...Your life will never be the same again.' For the next 4 weeks, treat everybody you know as the most important person on earth and you will be surprised with the results. Leave people with warm words, especially the elderly, it could be the last time you see them! As I end this chapter, I know you will master the skills of enchanting, encouraging, endearing, energising and enthusing. This art blesses the giver as much as the receiver.

“Be genuinely interested in people. Remember, every person - be he duke or beggar - has some unique experiences.” - R.. Maxwell.

“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.” - Goethe.

“Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances.” - Solomon, Biblical proverb.

## Chapter 54 Human Resources.

This chapter follows aptly the last one on empowering others. I know that soon you will be supervising some workers; eventually you will be employing your own. Thomas Watson Sr, who built the giant IBM computer company once noted, 'You can confiscate the factories, burn the buildings, but leave me the employees and I will rebuild my empire.' T. Peters & R. Waterman observed, 'Unusual effort on the part of...apparently ordinary workers is one of the main indications of a superior enterprise.' All commercial undertaking can be summed up in 3 words: Staff, service, success, or people, products, profits. Note that I always put personnel first, without a good team you will not get the rest. Mary Kay, founder of the great cosmetics company stated, 'A company is only as good as its people.' Bernard Tapie, the French industrialist said: 'Any company philosophy that does not consider its human resources as its most important asset is doomed sooner or later to certain failure.' Workers can make or break a company.

Managers want results, but it is people who produce them. Tending the human spirit is the core of management. The billionaire J. P. Getty affirmed: 'The key to all directions in business lies in directing human activities.' All aspects of an enterprise is coloured by the motivation, competence and performance of its workers. It is not the number of people employed that makes it successful; it is the number working! The best workers are those who work as though they own the company. That is why bonuses and profit-sharing work wonders. Y. Yamasaki of Mazda declared, 'You may have the best projects in the world, or the most sophisticated equipment, but without good employees you have nothing.' Here are points to help you:

**1. First, search and select.** Get the best people in the first place. If you lack expertise, get those who can select for you.

**2. Believe in subordinates.** If your faith is sincere, deep, unwavering, and attested by words and actions, it will bear fruits.

**3. Support.** Give workers training, information, authority and various facilities to do the job well. Provide regular feedback to improve their work. Lee Iacocca said, 'The only way to motivate people is to communicate with them.' Instead of criticising destructively, help them to learn from mistakes, and

continuously impart to them more knowledge and skills.

**4. Attachment and aspiration.** A. Morita of Sony observed, 'To motivate people, you have to make them feel part of a family and treat them with respect due to members of a family.' Give them belonging and involvement in objectives, decisions, activities, rewards and visions on a bright future. Workers must have a sense of direction, purpose and anticipation. Without all these, they dwindle away. D. Burr, founder of People Express Airlines said, 'Our personnel need a perspective on the future. Without the opportunity for growth, they would all leave.'

**5. Recognition and reward.** Create a lasting environment for top performance. Boost hope, beliefs, self-esteem, and the will to achieve. Catch workers doing things well and praise them - a highly motivating gesture. Reward them well. Bill Marriott Jr, president of the Marriott Corp. asserted, 'The attention and consideration given even to the lowliest employee has always led to improvement in the business.'

**6. Make work enjoyable.** Ensure that tasks are interesting; providing learning, challenge, responsibility and fulfilment. Without the congenial human climate and the right 'tone', even the best efficiency and performance may slacken. We all want to work or do business where it's pleasant and interesting. Enthusiasm and elation are contagious too!

**7. Empathy and expectations get results.** It's proven that workers take pride in their work; they satisfy demands for results if you have respect, concern and empathy for them. They tend to accomplish what is expected, especially with joint expectations on both sides. Greater responsibilities build confidence too.

The ability to use not only our own knowledge and skills, but those of others, is vital. Attract, develop and keep good workers always. Remember, you will have the ones you deserve! The way you treat them will be the way they treat your business and customers. Good **staff** produce good **stuff**. Kindness and diplomacy are best. We need each other to survive and thrive. Take care of those under you and you will be lifted to prosperity and greatness by their achievements!

## Chapter 55 Building your Charm and Charisma.

Tonight, I searched for a famous world leader or show-business star without charisma; I couldn't find any! Take Eddie Murphy, Bill Cosby, Sean Connery, John Kennedy, Ronald Reagan or Gorbachev, they all captivate people and remain in their memory. Successful people have a certain edge - the human touch, that is why some doctors are so much busier than others! People are allured more to your human side, than to your possession and position. The charismatic person has magnetism deep within, which vents through with drawing power. He pulls and influences with a strength from his heart and soul. His charm emanates from inner qualities, health, vitality, naturalness, excellent appearance, body-language and communication; it oozes leadership and draws esteem. Here are good steps towards that winning personality:

**Firstly, Integrate and beautify your inner self.** Much of your charm is rooted in your heart and soul, in spiritual and moral qualities that are seeping outwards. Your internal compositions are very important. Cultivate a kind, contented, forgiving, generous, healthy and jubilant nature, which inevitably breaks through your skin with attraction and radiance. W. T. Bacon wrote, 'All our actions take their hue from the complexion of the heart, as landscape do their variety from light.' Lady Blessington noted, 'There is no cosmetic for beauty like happiness.' The great writer Keats made a lasting remark: 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever.'

**Secondly, Be yourself.** The days of full feather, theatrical entrance, iron-fisted handshake and locking hypnotist's stare are over. That will drive everyone crazy, including yourself! Nothing beats naturalness, so be your best self, consistently. After all, everyone is beautifully unique and should remain so. Build that unique image by being yourself. Naturalness goes with sincerity and congruency. If you wear masks and your words clash with your thoughts and actions, they show and you have ruined everything; you may end up with a frayed facade!

**Thirdly, perfect your appearance and behaviour.** Which would you rather meet, a dead rat or a lively hummingbird? You will not get a second chance to make that first impression. Sid Ascher said, 'Your expression is the most

important thing you can wear.’ Your age or the appearance you are born with is not important, it is how you project it. Haven’t you heard of ‘charming old ladies’? Be calm, comfortable, human, easy to reach and pleasant to be with, yet alert and elated. Nobody wants to be with a nervous and difficult person. Be the centre of peace, poise, pleasantness, positivism, power and plenty!

Smile with your eyes. Act enthusiastic and you become enthusiastic. Move, and you are motivated. Spend time improving and refining your standing and sitting postures, style of walking and talking, disposition, facial habits and expressions. Sleep, exercise and nutrition are vital, they put the twinkle into your eyes. Let me tell you a secret: In recent years I discovered to my amazement that people who routinely do Taichi exercise look sparkling, and much younger. Taichi draws in an enormous amount of oxygen. Try inhaling fresh oxygen in abundance for an hour, and you will find that your IQ, alertness, well-being, creative and analytical capacities increase by 30%. Try it! Experts found that increased oxygen in blood cells reduces the incidents of cancer. Have heaps of oxygen each day, it works wonders.

**Fourthly, draw and capture attentions.** I have no doubt which you prefer: Your puppy looking into your eyes or looking at a cat nearby? Notice people quickly and smile to them in a free, gentle way. Look attentively at the one you are talking to. Listen more and learn from others. Receive and ‘absorb’ other people before projecting yourself; find things to like about them. Focus your energy on them and exude enthusiasm. I suggest you read books on ‘working the room’ and mingling, and revise Chapter 20 on communication skills again. These skills are indispensable in your incessant interaction with people. Your verbal speed, tempo and pauses, tone and pitch of voice, eye expressions and physical gestures are all important and must harmonise with existing people and places. Learn to use words that are vivid, alive, catchy, simple yet powerful; words like life, love, joy, beauty, heart, soul, hope, peace and warmth. Speak with boundless energy, sincerity and conviction, and you will get across to people with such electrical intensity. Share jokes and laughter, they are dynamic.

Another skill I want to emphasize here is the matching and pacing of the other person’s thoughts, words and deeds. Be a mirror of his breathing, posture, moods, language, gestures, thinking and interests. Handle situations in a you-and-me-against-the-world fashion. This magical bond strengthens your spiritual and

business domain remarkably. Greater rapport makes the sharing of ideas and work a piece of cake and a bundle of joy. You exert influence and win support naturally and powerfully, it is fantastic! R. Rolland declared: ‘The friend who understands you, creates you.’ William James, the American philosopher said, ‘The most immutable barrier in nature is between one man’s thoughts and another’s.’

Remember names of people. Be someone people would love to meet again; the interesting and humorous person, from whom they gain a wealth of knowledge, wisdom and fun. Seize opportunities to congratulate people on their accomplishment or windfall. Pet people’s ego, not your own. Make them feel needed and useful. Experiences have shown that the person who appreciates the value of others ends up being the most appreciated. The ability to win and keep affection is a great treasure.

**Next, win confidence, trust and admiration.** Humbleness and simplicity win respect, the world is so big and complex, you do not know it all. Emerson said: ‘To be simple is to be great.’ Keep secrets and confidence and you win reverence and loyalty. Give before getting, especially when it’s least expected. Show your human side instead of being cold and calculative. Carry no grudge or grievance; you should never allow any misunderstanding to arise and exist in the first place. Allow no negativism in your life.

**Lastly, leadership qualities boost your charisma.** They include: A positive, proactive, polite, relaxed, confident, elegant and balanced personality; good priority, time and habit management; dignity, influence, resourcefulness, competence, assertiveness, decisiveness, excellent self-image and social skills; the ability to empower others, gain support and to solve problems quickly. Now all your talents are at your disposal, build your charisma, go forth, live with intensity and affection, charm and enrich everyone you meet!

## Chapter 56 Marketing Yourself and Attracting Influential People.

In late 1961 Brian Epstein went down to a stuffy little pub in Liverpool and discovered 4 scruffy boys named John, Paul, George and Ringo. Days later he drew up a contract to manage them commercially. The rest is history. The Beatles became the most famous and influential singing group of all time. They gave us hundreds of songs, as distinctive and diversified as *Help* and *Yesterday*. Sean Connery, who played James Bond in many movies had earlier caught the eyes of Walt Disney, who took him to the U.S. to do a film. In that movie he was seen by producers Saltzman and Broccoli who called him to an interview. They later recounted: 'We watched him bound across the street like a superman, we knew we had our Bond.' Andrew Lloyd Webber brought us *Phantom of the Opera*, and other great musicals He revealed that his parents were his greatest influence, he grew up surrounded by music!

There are many examples of stars who were discovered by influential men, who helped them towards success. Can you recall the 2 guys in Chapter 50, who prospered after attending on Mr Charles Schwab and Mr Andrew Carnegie's mother? Many if not most, of those who achieved success had helped or impressed someone along the way, an associate or employer, a mentor, promoter or benefactor. If it is someone in a position of commercial influence or political power, the climb is even quicker. I have seen several rapid rises in my time. There have been many cases of initiative and hard work being generously rewarded. Isn't this plain justice? There were also instances of help given to someone who later came into a fortune, the kindness was repaid tenfold! Entrepreneurs like Mr Carnegie made dozens of his common workers millionaires. He was matched later by hundreds of others, like Bill Gates of Microsoft in recent years, who brought hundreds of his ordinary computer technicians into the millionaire club.

Now that you have built your charisma, you can sell your knowledge and skills, and attract influential people to help you towards success. You can also share other people's ideas, talents and resources in a co-operative way, with mutual benefits. Later, I will impart to you the power of synergy; two persons often accomplish more together than they would separately. It is often said: The sum is

more than the total of all the parts. Besides human co-operation, our lives are very much a selling process. Everyday we are selling our abilities, services and products. In selling your talents and skills you must, however, do so tactfully, don't be seen pushing and parading them. Above all, in seeking recognition and help you must be prepared to work for your rewards, to give before you receive. Remember these good points:

1. Your character, virtues, image and conduct must deserve esteem and affection. Re-read those chapters on these again.
2. Give excellent performance. Use your talents, special knowledge and skills. A person's expertise or great idea soon receives someone's financial backing and ends up in tremendous success.
3. Go the extra mile. In doing so, you produce more, and further strengthen your positive attitude, enthusiasm, drive and sense of achievement. You gain momentum and your winnings will multiply. Nothing succeeds like success! There is a kind of magical power in the person who gives extra, and does everything well. He is wanted everywhere, and is rightly and lavishly rewarded in the end.
4. Master communication. Convey your ideas, knowledge and proposals beautifully. Be articulate and convincing. Couple your skills with some showmanship, especially along the line of positive emotions, appreciation, courtesy and politeness.

Focus your energy on selected people and goals. Do not waste time on too many social functions, arrange vital and fruitful discussions with associates instead. Please don't apple-polish, you may lose the respect of the very people you want to impress. Just be kind and obliging, all the way. Goethe said, 'A noble person attracts noble people, and knows how to hold on to them.'

The great scholar B. Gracian taught us: 'There is active and passive sympathy, and both kinds work wonders among people in high positions...No amount of effort can take the place of this mysterious favour.' Few men can attain a high degree of lasting success without the support and inspiration of others. One of our greatest assets is our ability to serve and maximise our value to society, and to gain recognition, assistance and blessings from others; only then can we enrich both ourselves and others.



## Chapter 57 Tenacity, Perseverance and Determination.

Last night I came across a cockroach, smashed its tummy and dropped it in the rubbish. Hours later, it was gone! The insect has an iron will to live, and it can even survive starvation and suffocation in a bottle. What resilience and determination!

Tenacity is just as important too. If you were an octopus whose tentacles couldn't hold on to the prey, you would go hungry. We should be like postage stamps, stick to something until it gets there! Tenacity means not leaving things unfinished. As a manager, I am obsessed about tenaciousness. I insisted that workers pursue projects all the way to completion, and that salesmen persist until the orders are signed. Sales people should emulate the great entrepreneur Donald Trump, who cited: 'More time passed, and I wrote another letter, suggesting a whole new way to make a deal. I was relentless, even in the face of a total lack of encouragement...sheer persistence is the difference between success and failure.' Estee Lauder agreed when she said, 'What then is the mystical ingredient? It's persistence.'

The great success guru Og Mandino said, 'The rewards in life only come at the end of a race...You never know how close you are if you don't round that turn. I always go one step further... one step at a time is not very difficult. I persevere until I succeed.' Walter Elliot confirmed this, he said: 'Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after the other.' Anyone who persists long enough gets what he hungers for, and reaches his chosen destination. Former British Prime Minister, B. Disraeli asserted, 'The secret of success is constancy to purpose.' On the other hand, lack of persistence is the cause of failures. We cannot pretend that life is easy, and even hard work and stamina may still run into myriad problems, comprising both small and gigantic obstacles, where it is easy to find an excuse to throw in the towel. Only the few who plod on despite opposition and rejection will reach their goals. Even our common efforts of training, acquiring knowledge and skills need persistence too; ask any champion.

A Chinese saying chimed: 'You must taste the bitterest of bitter, to be the greatest of the great.' Sadness makes us appreciate the contrasting feeling of joy; without suffering, there is no success. Nothing of value comes without efforts.

Some people wondered how others could accomplish so much in their lives; the truth is, many overnight successes took years! Ray Kroc of McDonald's affirmed this: 'But I was like so many people in the entertainment business who practised their routine for years...and then suddenly find themselves in the spotlight of stardom...but my 30 years of preparation was like a long, long night!...'

Nothing in the world can replace perseverance. Even talent; there is nothing more common than wasted talent. Persistence often outpaces talent in reaching success. We must build our perseverance with: Desire, clear goals and purpose, strategies, self-reliance, resilience, knowledge and skills, inspiration and support from others, and will-power. Let us cultivate excellent and powerful habits too, as persistence is the direct result of habit!

Everywhere, water is breaking rocks into pebbles, not merely through strength but perseverance! It's sad that many people quit when the going gets tough, often just a few steps from victory. It is always the last key in the bunch that opens the door! Those who fail always pick the path of least persistence. Those who succeed know they have to go through many setbacks and disappointments, and that no one gets to the top in one single leap; their willingness to keep trudging on rough and slippery terrain sets them apart. They challenge the impossible. A. C. Clarke said, 'The only way of discovering the limits of the possible is to venture a little way past them into the impossible.' My good news to you is, successful people so often enjoyed their work that it never felt like hard work. Being busy is not good enough, you must love what you are doing and be creative and resourceful, then the hardship will subside.

In 1994 Baba M. Pal, a 49 year-old Indian broke a world climbing record by scaling a snow-capped Himalayan peak on one leg and crutches. Think about that; then compare your determination with his. People who say something cannot be done are often embarrassed and surprised by someone doing it. It is always possible to do whatever you choose. The man who really wants to do something finds a way or makes one! Others just find an excuse. Some may succeed because they're fated to, but I believe most succeeded because they were determined to. Persistence is based on our power of will. Betty Cuthbert, Australian Olympic gold medalist stated: 'An integral part of being a star is the will to win. All the champions have it.'

Longfellow, the poet said, 'Genius is infinite painstaking.' So be consistent,

passionate yet patient, God's delays are not God's denial. He will reward you. Let your desire and will-power go together, they are unstoppable. With perseverance, often what seems impossible in the short term is possible in the long term. An example is the computer, frolic with its magic, and you may ask: 'How was that possible?' Accumulated improvements in the last 40 years has brought wonders. The hardship and destitute once suffered by celebrities and superstars like Lincoln, Mandela, Disney, Billy Joel, Helen Reddy, the Beatles, Gloria Estefan and others have proven that impossibilities and despair in the short term can turn into achievements that are beyond our wildest imagination!

Defeats are temporary, and failures are never permanent. Let adversity and pain prod us to go faster and further. The wheel of fortune turns. Henry Beecher commented, 'When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you... never give up then, for that's just the place and time that the tide will turn.' Just be persistent and hopeful, let your desire surpass your distaste, work on steadily, and your dreams will come true. I wanted to leave you with the words of the great Sir Winston Churchill: 'Never give in, never, never, never, never.' A better approach is: To pass through life's tough journey and reach success, you must have **desire**, then focus with a **will of steel** on your **goal**, and you only need to take **one step at a time**, but **keep stepping and stepping!**

"Perfection is attained by slow degrees; it requires the hand of time." - Voltaire, prominent French writer.

"By perseverance the snail reached the ark." - C. H. Spurgeon.

"No road is too long to the man who advances deliberately without undue haste, and no honours are too distant for the man who prepares himself for them with patience." - J. Bruyere, French moralist.

## Chapter 58 Labour Now, Luxury Later.

In 1976, my diligent and thrifty mother-in-law bought a piece of land for M\$9,000 and sold it 9 years later for M\$250,000! Land values have soared in Asia in recent years. I have an ironclad conviction: If youngsters would work hard and invest their money every year before they are 35, they could have feastful and fun-filled lives later, pampered with luxuries that are compounded many times. They have started the multiplication of wealth at an earlier date. If they had been lazy and spendthrift instead, little would await them, except more drudgery for the rest of their lives.

Prosperity is the fruit of our endeavours, and our ability to sacrifice now for what we want eventually. Let us have efforts now and enjoyment later. A Chinese proverb says: 'Toil now, then luxury forever.' Sir William Osler agreed: 'The best preparation for tomorrow is to do today's work superbly well.' Dr M. Scott Peck in his best-selling book *The Road Less Travelled*, proposed brilliantly 'a process of scheduling the pain and pleasure of life in such a way as to enhance the pleasure by meeting and experiencing the pain first and getting it over with.' This means self-denial and sacrifice, working and investing to double your wealth.

**Work is noble.** God wills that we love and labour, yet many think they are living when they are doing neither. A person is truly poor, not when he has nothing, but when he does nothing. Thomas Carlyle wrote, 'Even in the meanest sorts of labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony the instant he sets himself to work.' Your performance is your trade mark; on the other hand, laziness and sloppiness invite poverty. Arthur Brisbane asserted: 'You are an ant in the human anthill. Be a working ant, not a ridiculous insect pitying itself.' When A. Schwarzenegger was asked the reason for his great success he replied: 'Hard work, hard work, lots of discipline and positive thinking.'

**The secret of sweet success is sweat.** Successful people take the trouble to do things which failures do not like to. Their strength of desire and purpose simply overrides feeling of dislike and discomfort. The road to success goes uphill, otherwise everyone would be there in no time! Isn't it nice to be given the chance and choice? It is only in the dictionary that success comes before work. The law of cause and effect warns us: no pain, no gain. Rewards may come in various forms,

but always in proportion to your efforts. Many penniless refugees and immigrants laboured despite their setbacks in new lands, and later became successful bankers (Carlos Arboleya of Miami), pop stars (Gloria Estefan), entrepreneurs (Iacocca of Chrysler) and tycoons (Li Ka-Shing of Hong Kong).

The renowned Picasso, for example, produced so many paintings that he burned many of them to keep warm! Another great painter Michelangelo said, 'If people knew how hard I worked to acquire this talent, they would no longer be surprised.' Inventor Edison admitted, 'I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work.' Look at the fame and adoration these people have earned. Helen G. Brown said, 'Hard work and discipline will get you everywhere.' The poet Longfellow left us a beautiful reminder: 'The heights by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night.'

**Labour brings vitality, fulfilment and prosperity.** Vauvenargues the French writer asserted, 'The fruit derived from labour is the sweetest of all pleasures.' Spielberg, who brought us great movies, often worked 14-hour days. He is like the many rich and famous who love their work, and have the constant desire to create and face new challenges. For them, work is play, and they remain young and enthusiastic through the years. Physical and intellectual growth and fulfilment come from purpose, and enterprise. Emerson proclaimed, 'A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best.' Bernard Brochard said, 'With will-power, ideas, and a willingness to work two hours longer than others, it is not difficult to make money.'

**Work weaves a fruitful and fortunate future.** Even simple animals know the benefit of delayed gratification. The squirrel stores up nuts for the winter. A mole digs a tunnel 250 feet long in one night, and look at the spiders, ants and bees! Progress now, otherwise you will look back one day and see the many opportunities you have missed, and things you never got around to do. Your accomplishment will be the result of your expended and extended efforts. My tenet remains: If you work hard and invest in the first half of your life, you will not have to work very hard in the next half. Besides, you will have reached that 'half-way house' or platform sooner, for that powerful take-off. You will then snowball along, as nothing succeeds like success.

**Work is good for you.** Happiness lives in an enterprising mind and walks on busy feet. Medical experts maintain that those who work heartily have no stress or worry. Whenever you are unhappy or worried, try some gardening, flower-cutting and home beautification, and feel the difference! Exertion is a good psychic cure; it never killed anybody, only fear, depression and early retirement do! George Bernard Shaw said, 'I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live.' David Grayson said, 'Happiness, I have always discovered, is nearly always a rebound from hard work.'

**Work for the love of it, not for the love of money.** Put work into your heart, and heart into your work. Just concentrate on enjoying and doing a good job, and money will follow. Use your heads, but put in your hearts and souls too. Do not deny your enjoyment, or stifle your feelings and dreams. Charles Schwab asserted: 'The man who does not work for the love of work, but only for money is neither likely to make money nor to find much fun in life.' Work is not just a bread-earner, it is an expression of unique tastes, skills, talents and passion! Do it in the spirit of a master craftsman or artist; pride takes out the drabs and drudgery. Work is easy when you plunge into it, even easier when you love it. After you have started on something, it is not that insurmountable, and soon the pile of things that seemed overwhelming during your procrastination is behind you, finished!

Sheer diligence is not enough; you must plan, organise and keep improving for peak performance. Quality is just as important as quantity. Working smart is better than working hard; filling time isn't using time; being busy is different from being productive. Use moments of serenity to sharpen your saw, to draw inspiration and power from within. A life is the result of the work put into it, just as every home is a reflection of the people living there. God helps those who help themselves, so earn and invest now for a better future. You will reap what you sow. Work hard; all work and no play may make Jack a dull boy, but he is richer than you are!

## Chapter 59 Thrift for Thriving.

I have good news for you! If a child of 15 earns \$1000 a year in a summer job, invests it in a growth-stock fund earning 10% annual returns, and keeps up this investment yearly, he would have more than \$1,000,000 by the time he is 65! This is based on the interest-compounding table. If he had bought land he would probably have that much money by the age of 40! Putting it simply: If you refrain from spending a dollar on donuts each day and save it, that is \$365 a year; you will have over \$365,000, probably as early as the age of 40! Can you recall my mother-in-law's bonanza mentioned in the last Chapter? She did it in only 9 years! Appreciation in land values is impressive because with population and economic growth, space becomes limited and precious. Whatever you save now would multiply, with interest added pile after pile. Benjamin Franklin said, 'Money makes money, and the money makes, makes more money.' He added: 'The way to wealth is as plain as the way to the market. Waste neither time, nor money, but make the best use of both.'

Insurance people always remind us of harsh reality. By the age of 65, only 1 out of 100 people is wealthy, 5 are financially independent, a few are dead and about 90 are dead broke and relying on some pension or government help. These people forgot to put aside 10 cents in each dollar they got. Those who do not are making a grave mistake. Besides the blunder of not putting money aside, people have a remarkable ability to spend next year's income and to live beyond their means! Many have 2 cars in the garage; none of them paid for. Soon they find it tough, working for money they have already spent on things they don't need, and on things to impress people they don't like! Think of that.

If you buy what you don't need, you will end up craving for things you cannot buy. Anyway, saving makes poor people rich, while squandering makes the rich poor. Incidents world-wide attest to that. John Taylor, for example, of the pop group Duran Duran recently admitted: 'The truth is we need to work...so much was squandered it was ridiculous...Our life-style has been crazy. We flew in Concorde and rented suites in the world's best hotels.' I also heard of people who had won millions in lotteries and a few years later they were penniless. The world now spends US\$400 million on cigarettes and US\$160 million on beer! False standards,

beliefs and values, foolish and frivolous pastimes and amusements all pave the way to failures. Extravagance, gambling and overspending have resulted in distress, disasters, bankruptcies and even crime.

Our financial strength and independence really depend more on the money we save than the money we earn. Save money and money will save you. In saving, you not only prepare for rainy days and lean years, you multiply your wealth for greater returns. Remember, the financially secured are happy and carefree people. Get in the habit of budgeting now, while you are young; it is an intelligent and well-planned way of using hard-earned dollars. You are then in charge of money before it controls and cripples you. A good budget differentiates between urgency and importance, between short term benefits and long term goals; furthermore, it must adapt to growth and changes. Your budget must identify necessities, luxuries and portions for investment. With good budgeting, you can prepare yourself financially and mentally at every point, to grasp various opportunities whenever they appear.

Thrift should never dwell narrowly on money matters. It should command all our visible and invisible wealth, including time, energy, talents and abilities. Andrew Carnegie said, 'Thrift is the great fortune-maker... but it develops also, the man's character.' I couldn't agree more with him. Frugality governs virtues and excellence in many ways. It controls finance, possessions, and personal habits. Such self-discipline usually goes with focus, purpose, organisation, order, optimisation of opportunities and resources, and making the most of everything. Thrift is indeed the foundation for the development of self-mastery and greatness.

I will end here with the wisdom of 3 men. Napoleon Hill said, 'Fortunate is the person who has developed self-control to steer a straight course towards his objective.' Donald Trump proclaimed, 'I never threw money around. I learned from my father that every penny counts, because before too long your pennies turn into dollars.' Mark Twain urged us, 'Plan for the future because that is where you are going to spend the rest of your life.' Scatter with one hand and gather with two. Keep saving; from saving comes having.



## Chapter 60 Observance, Inquisitiveness and Enterprise.

In the 1880s John Pemberton, a man of vigilance, curiosity and insight foresaw a fortune in some kind of a stimulating, non-alcohol drink for America. He persistently studied and tested the recipe for an ideal beverage, which contained extracts of coca leaves and cola nuts. Later, satisfied with his final product, he sold it as a patent medicine. Can you guess its name? Pemberton died soon after; the syrup business was bought over by an equally enterprising man Asa Candler (who in his childhood had doctored his pets and pigeon with self-made medicine). Candler promoted the new drink, which spread like wildfire throughout the whole world, it is the Coca-Cola! This interesting story was imparted to us by Mark Pendergrast in '*For God, Country and Coca-Cola.*'

In the Feb. 1989 issue of the *Reader's Digest*, John Culhane told us about a young cartoonist Walt Disney, who arrived one day in New York to negotiate business, only to find that he no longer owned his rabbit-cartoons. In his dismay and distress he recalled a field mouse he had seen near his drawing board months earlier. His observance paid off; he soon turned this mouse into a famous character - Mickey Mouse!

In the June 1994 issue of the '*Success*' magazine, I read about an alert youngster Steve Geppi, who was vacationing at a beach near Baltimore, USA in 1974. His nephew was reading a comic and he quickly grappled it from him! He was constantly on the look-out for comics, buying them and exchanging them with other readers. His industrious nature and love for comics outgrew his job as a mail delivery man, and in 1974, while his post-office colleagues laughed, he started his own comic book store; which soon flourished. Eventually, the mailman turned into a tycoon. His company did US\$140 million in sales in 1992, and US\$222 million in 1993!

Many of the world's great inventions were the product of observance and inquisitiveness. In a biography Robert Lacey wrote about a little boy in Michigan in 1870, who marvelled at the inside of a time-piece and later became an ardent watch repairer. He often took mechanical toys apart. One day, he watched from his horse-drawn wagon in wonder, at the first non-horse-drawn vehicle he had ever seen. He jumped off his wagon to talk to the engineer of the steam engine. That

encounter, he admitted later, was his handshake with destiny. His love for the mechanical led him to jobs in a machine shop, a shipyard, and in farm machinery. This man went on to build one of the biggest and most pioneering car-makers in the world. Do you know his name? He was the great Henry Ford, and Robert Lacey's book is '*Ford: The men and the Machine.*'

Judith Stone wrote in '*Discover*' about an inquisitive Swiss engineer De Mestral, who years ago, found bits of plants clinging to his trousers after a walk in the woods. He quickly examined them under the microscope and found that these burs had tiny hooks that clung firmly to tiny loops in clothing. He then invented a wonderful fabric called Velcro, comprising velours and crochets. Velcro is now widely used to stick flaps on wallets, shoes and bags. Great observance and enterprise indeed!

Can you recall the little toy called the Slinky? It is a coil of spring that collects itself as it trips down the stairs. The invention was again the product of alertness and observation. As told in '*The Philadelphia Enquirer*' by Jeanne M. Laskas, the inventor Richard James was a shipyard engineer, who had earlier noticed a coil of spring falling off his desk and rolling over itself in a marvellous way. He made a toy and gave it the name - Slinky. Now they send away 35,000 pieces daily!

Some years ago, an American scuba diver plunged into a pond on the golf course and saw thousands of golf balls that had fallen and remained submerged for years. He came up with thousands of balls on the first day. As narrated by Bill Geist in '*Monster Trucks and Hair-in-a-Can*', the business escalated into a large scale business throughout the US, reaching a gross revenue of US\$5 million in 1993!

John Rockefeller said, 'If you want to succeed, you have to forge new paths and avoid borrowed ones that promise success.' I could go on and tell you a score of real life incidents, but all the stories have the same message, store them in your memory, and let them be your guiding light and propellant towards great discoveries, creations and enterprises. Thereafter, may your rich and fulfilling life spill over, and enrich others too.

## Chapter 61 Provide the Environment and Rewards for Excellence.

I hope that you will attain a good level of success as early as possible, that will put you on a higher springboard for greater accomplishments. This higher launching-pad will provide you better environment, facilities and strength for reaching goals, and bring a fuller life sooner! Conversely, those drowned in long periods of hardship and low spirits find it harder to make a change. It is best to make a break as early as you can, and jump from the donkey onto the train!

**Your spiritual and intellectual well-being is a powerhouse for achievement and greatness.** You have empowered others, it is time to empower your entire being, mentally, physically and socially. Your environment starts from within. Fill and nurse this 'fountain' with calm, clarity, confidence and contentment. We know that talents and self-esteem were built in the early years. If your self-image is not strong enough, you should make amends immediately with affirmations and visualisation. I will teach you prayer and meditation later. You can remove your weaknesses conclusively because you live with yourself 24 hours a day and you know yourself best, even your most secret thoughts; besides, you are now older, with better control over your surroundings. Top up your feelings of power, worth and wizardry now!

**Your health and vitality must be in superior form.** Deep breath is your first step to health. Oxygen is - as medical research has testified - the single most important agent. It drives the cleansing power of the lymphatic system that removes toxins. Your physiology and disposition affect your capacity too. I will discuss these in full in another chapter. Maintain mental clarity and sharpness with exercise and rest. The Greek Tycoon Onassis praised Judo and Yoga. He swam regularly, so did Paul Getty, Pope John Paul II, China's Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and many notables. Prominent statesmen go fishing, jogging and retreating. Goethe, and other great writers go for long walks to gain inspiration and genius. Take special care of yourself. Use the best personal care products. Eat nutritious, water-rich and vitamin-rich foods. Avoid smokers, pollution and unhygienic places. Your body is a precious, precision machinery, love and treat it

well.

**Your physical environment should be conducive to efficiency and excellence.** This is aided by all the amenities and catalysts for achievement, which provide serenity and power. Your working space must be quiet, clear, cool, cosy and conducive to problem-solving, inspiration and creativity. Use the magic of music, colours, nature, fresh air, plants and flowers. Create the climate, the ambience and the probability of using all your resources in the most fruitful way.

**Your social sphere is paramount.** Mingle with successful people and emulate them. Win many friendships. Promote cordiality, enthusiasm, cheer and harmony in all aspects of your life. You just cannot progress and prosper amidst doubts, tension, discord and stress. A champion needs and deserves the best environment and empowerment.

**Pamper yourself after each accomplishment.** but avoid lavish and conclusive rewards. Once a rich man told me that those who are less wealthy are more fortunate, because they value, enjoy and treasure everything they have. I agree totally with him. Money can become as meaningless to a rich man as snow to an Eskimo. Sheer monetary and physical rewards may excite initially, but ultimately it is the quality of spiritual and emotional experience that outshines all. Happiness is a journey, not a destination. In life, besides the quality of experience, it is best to be compensated intermittently and progressively. Such 'carrots' provide the push and the pull towards victory. Both instant and anticipated rewards are effective; the current ones pamper and invigorate you, the forthcoming ones become part of your goals. Rewards that help you towards success are best, such as a better house, car, office, better clothing, literature, tools and facilities.

Oscar Wilde noted, 'To love one's self is the beginning of a life-long romance.' You will have no rivals! If you feather your nest, pamper yourself along the way, build an excellent environment and make progress everyday of the year, life really could not be better! You are in for the best. In this auspicious setting, may you unfold into a model of society, a masterpiece of the universe.

## Chapter 62 The Recipe for Success.

Being successful is basically being healthy, wealthy and happy. Let us have an overview of the various agents for achieving this. This will give us better insight and control of our resources and our lives as a whole. For simplicity, I have reduced the recipe to 20 items:

**1. Powerful self-image and confidence.** Success originates in infancy, even as far back as the womb. Calibre and confidence are developed over the years, enriched by a high level of affection, assurance, approval, admiration and acclaim from parents, family members and friends.

**2. Coherent, energetic, warm, supportive relationship and home atmosphere.** There is a lady behind every successful man, and a mother for every genius. The great Edison confessed: 'My mother was the making of me, ... I felt that I had someone to live for; someone I must not disappoint.' Bill Cosby's mother admitted that what she had to give him was plenty of love, and he was determined to be something. Many outstanding people admitted that their loved ones were the wind beneath their wings.

**3. Early experience and development of interest in certain fields.** Lloyd Webber grew up surrounded by music. According to P. Pierce who wrote *Bill Cosby - Laughter With Lessons*, Cosby's humour was shaped in childhood in a Philadelphia ghetto, where he studied intently how funny materials were delivered on TV. He spread jokes around the neighbourhood, and left his shoe-shine customers in stitches. His teacher said he would rather clown than study. At the college pub, he served jokes with drinks. The world is teeming with such examples of success-building.

**4. Reading, research, exploration, even obsession in these fields.** Inquisitiveness, intense interest, captivating studies and the amassing of knowledge and skills are powerful channels to a prosperous and fulfilling life. Among successes like Ford, Disney, Spielberg, Honda, Bill Gates and others, their great love for their work was true as steel.

**5. High level of creativity, ingenuity, natural ability & intelligence.** These traits, when strongly developed and reinforced, and given the right environment, support, opportunity and timing, are mighty assets. Consequently,

business acumen and entrepreneurial capacities are cultivated, culminating in great enterprises and wealth.

**6. Physical and psychological good health, with vitality.** This is the basis for vibrancy, energy, contentment, inner beauty, peace and general well-being, the components of a blissful and bountiful life.

**7. Dreams, burning desire, ambition, goals, plans and priorities.** Most great men and achievers were dreamers, because nothing happened unless first there was a dream. An idea can turn pebbles into pyramids. Dreams fuel the burning desire that translates into goals and strategies and subsequent actions. These invariably find their way to accomplishments and fulfilment. Scott Reid said, 'This one step - choosing a goal and sticking to it - changes everything.'

**8. Readiness to capitalise on opportunities, resources, and the environment.** An observant, inquisitive, creative and proactive nature that makes things happen is a great attribute; likewise, the vigilance to seize opportunities, even from a glimmer or casual remark! The capacity to use OPM, other people's mind and money, and various resources helps too. (Ref: Tyler G. Hicks 1974) Eddy Murphy's big movies on Beverley Hills Cop were the idea of Michael Eisner; inspired by the police who stopped him for speeding on his first day as president of Paramount Pictures! In 1984, Andrew Lloyd Webber was browsing in a second-hand shop in New York and spotted an old book called *The Phantom of the Opera!*

**9. Vision, direction, strategies, decisiveness and performance.** Successful men are men of great foresight, insight, clear perspectives, smart decisions, ingenious plans and execution of these plans. Willa A. Foster commented rightly: 'Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skilful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.'

**10. Motivation and the capacity for taking action.** Motivation and action are almost the be-all and end-all of great achievements. Ideas without action are passive and fruitless. Thinking is important, but creating and doing things are even more important.

**11. Mastery of the powers of the mind.** This employs the subconscious, imagery, affirmations, belief, wealth consciousness, positive thinking and the sheer stoppage of negativism. Expectation is a powerful denominator, similar to the

natural anticipation of marriage and family-raising. Success should be seen as a birthright, not just an attainable thing. You must be convinced that you can and you will succeed. Whether you think you can or you can't, you are right!

**12. Determination, perseverance and single-minded pursuit.** These are formidable forces when combined with focus, job-loving, spiritual flow, dedication, industriousness and the going of extra miles.

**13. Courage and a pioneering spirit that dares to be different.** Fortitude and toughness provide the fighting spirit for life's battles. A unique, independent, aggressive, assertive, go-getting, spearheading style can break new grounds, conquer fresh frontiers and reach magnificent victories. Most great men come under this category.

**14. Enthusiasm.** 'Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.' Said the renowned R. W. Emerson. This is indisputable and is as sure as egg is egg! Jest and zest go hand in hand in delightful living and big accomplishments. You can do many things, perhaps anything with enthusiasm. It brings energy, cheer and sparkle.

**15. Strong guiding principles, values, character and integrity.** A life based on good attitude, discipline, religion, morals and righteousness is the foundation for love, peace, grace, gratitude, contentment, fulfilment, joy and lasting success. A healthy lifestyle with excellent habits are really conducive because failure is a tough habit to break; so is success! When you get into the snowballing momentum of winning, you are unstoppable. Values are equally commanding, because what you value is what you think about, what you think about is what you become!

**16. Love, empathy, altruistic nature & motives.** When you empower others you empower yourself. You will receive more than you give. The world abounds with happiness and success that grew from a person's love for his work, products, customers and his fellowmen.

**17. Pleasing appearance, charisma, communication and social skills.** A person with such a personality, graciousness and capacity will definitely go places and go far. This needs little elaboration.

**18. Positive outlook, optimism and a sense of humour.** These ingredients build and enhance social and commercial success. They can surpass rejections and hardships, weather many storms, cope with failure, learn from mistakes, rebound

and emerge unscathed, in triumph.

**19. Setbacks or incidents that lead to strength and a new perspective.**

Sufferings, traumas, failures and even accidents have hardened and spurred people towards relief and solution. Often the regeneration and revival bring renewed strength, or even a revenging force that pushes forward to victory. The capacity for adaptability, flexibility, tough decision, creativity, change, improvements and growth is important here.

**20. Specialised knowledge, skills, products or service that fulfil needs.**

As I said, specialised capabilities and niche markets attract big incomes. Products and services that satisfied global needs have brought great successes, be they pop songs, suspense novels, thriller movies, fast foods, computers or beauty products.

History has shown that the availability of venture capital and formal education is not the prerequisite for success. The self-educated or less-educated stood out so well that there seemed to be more of them! They included Picasso, the Wright brothers, Will Rogers, George Bernard Shaw, Charlie Chaplin, Walt Disney, Harry Truman, Frank L. Wright, Henry Ford, and many tycoons in developing countries. Although the 7 Ds are important, namely: Dream, desire, direction, determination, diligence, dedication and discipline; different qualities propel people under different circumstances. People who excel as employees may not do well in self-employment. Talents and capacities that succeed in a certain career, community or country may not succeed in another. There are many variables in timing, situations, inputs and results, but every man is the architect of his own fortune and mind can move mountains, and some people will thrive anywhere; **I know you will.**



## Chapter 63 A Further Analysis of Success Ingredients.

I have seen, studied and thought enough about the causes of success to impart to you the short and long of them. Let us examine how they interplay and help us in varying degrees under different circumstances.

For those who were not born in Dixie's land or in beds of roses, the big determinant is the ability to change, to burst free from the chains of poverty and hopelessness. Change may come as an inspiration, a bounce-back stirred and hardened by hardship, an enforced escape from suffering, or a last resort. You see, setbacks are not bad after all! Unfortunately people are often the product of habit; stick-in-the-mud failures do not on the whole welcome change. If they did, they would have wriggled out of the mud soon enough. This is a chicken or egg problem, a quick-sand and a vicious spiral, because old habits weaken the ability to change, and poverty and commercial competition further dampen any chance of breaking through. Those who wriggle out in the all-important spirit of expectation and wealth-consciousness are fortunate indeed. Anticipation of success is powerful; more powerful when success is considered a birthright. You will simply find a way or make one. Self-image, self-reliance and the ability to think big help tremendously too.

Dreams, burning desire and clear goals are wonderful. There are immense advantages in having or working up a burning desire, which can bring a strong will and sense of direction; motivation and goals then follow suit. If you want something desperately enough, you will get it. Perseverance and hard work are also crucial. Remember, labour provides our bread and butter, and sometimes cake. Here, if enthusiasm and stamina are maintained right to the end, success is almost a certainty. Great achievers have shown not only love but considerable obsession and madness for their work.

The capacity to make things happen, to get things done and to conclude deals is most desirable. It often comes with proactivity, as opposed to reactivity. Proactive people enjoy whatever weather and master whatever situation they encounter, instead of reacting to it and complaining about it. They carry the sunshine with them!

As I said, opportunities are everywhere. There are openings to suit everyone

and others that match individual ways and resources. At other times, an opportunity is just an existing product waiting to be improved or a concept needing development. Observance and creativity, as we have seen are great endowments. Making things happen and the seizures of opportunities have much to do with timing. If 2 identical personalities did the same thing in the same way, their results may differ if their timing was different. Acting on something a week earlier or later makes a world of difference, especially when a strategic deal is clinched! That is why some have gained abundantly with a brand-new product, from sudden outbreaks of diseases or wars, from a new fad or fashion, a new idea or scientific discovery.

The niche market is an environment related to timing. Think of the opening of the huge McDonald's in Beijing, think of its novelty to the 10 million Chinese in that City! Or the arrival there of an international tennis tournament featuring Michael Chang. Special knowledge and skills also lead to niche markets, simply because these are needed somewhere. Knowing one's market well also reduces risks, wastage and inefficiency. Some niche markets are in fact fast-growth markets, like TV, videos, movies, Coca Cola and computers in developing countries. Discovery of a hidden new opportunity can be a trump card, you can thrive peacefully for a while without competitors.

Luck is an interesting factor. We can improve ours substantially, as we will see later. It exists in a whole spectrum of situations. There are brilliant, hard-working people with runs of bad luck, stuck in interim periods of limbo and setbacks that can run for years. It is in God's Divine Scheme that bad things happen to good people, for a purpose. Conversely, certain less-deserving people can without rhyme or reason, get huge windfalls. In summary, some have been very lucky, some very unlucky, while others capitalise on some luck. Then there are those who had no luck, yet they ploughed to victory. Remember too that luck lurks around everywhere, so be ready always!

Common sense is no less important than luck. It is the ability to make sound and practical observation, assessment and decisions to both daily and weighty matters. Imagination and creativity play big roles; many successes sprang from creative ideas. Others may lack creative concepts, but they could handle problems and hence opportunities in a resourceful way and flourished. On a higher plane lies talents, ingenuity and wisdom. Wisdom is vital and is acquired through rich

knowledge and experience. It harbours substantial street-smartness which is essential for thriving in a modern and complex society, for winning favours, cooperation and lucrative clientele. Those with talents should capitalise on them while those lacking them should work in areas where talents are not chief cornerstones for success. Others take to the ancient Chinese *Thick face, black heart* strategy, or Sun Tze's *Art of War*, and so on. Those without luck, talents and other blessings may resort to cunning and ruthlessness. This is a sad departure from religion and virtues, a path which too often leads to an eventual downfall.

Ruthlessness may take the form of risk-taking, which is not exactly gambling. Often many ventures need some kinds of intelligent, calculated risks to prosper. Without risks, the chances for bigger accomplishments are reduced. If you are a ship sheltering in the harbour, you are safe but you are not going anywhere! Millionaire M. Forbes observed, 'Risk-taking is an integral and intrinsic part of success or living a full life.'

Anyone who imitates and tries to be someone else should be thrown cold water. This seldom works, unless all your traits, circumstances and parameters match those of your idol. You may be undermining your natural style and substance. Associating with role models, mentors and winners, and understudying them will prove more satisfying and fruitful.

Those who mingle with losers stand to take on their poverty consciousness, short-sightedness and negativism. Ironically, some winners should be avoided too. They are the scheming, crooked, impermanent victors who thrive on shady deals. They eventually go to the dogs. Your integrity to yourself and to others must always play the first fiddle in life. In concluding, I want to remind you of your social prowess, image, and your ability in selling your knowledge, capabilities, your products and services. You can complete your *tour de force* by learning and mastering business acumen, win-win situations, reciprocal and interlocking benefits in commerce. You will diversify your businesses, reap multiple profits, preside over vertical and horizontal integration in the industry, and build your great empire and fortune.

## Chapter 64 The Paradox in the Pursuit of Success.

I hope to bring you an overall balance with this chapter. It has messages of caution, lest your pursuits in life meet with disappointments. Beware of imbalance and pitfalls; examples of these are: 1. Dwelling or getting carried away on some determinants of success, at the expense of others. 2. Narrow awareness and focus that ignore the whole picture. 3. Wrong priorities, putting first things last or jumping the gun.. Disequilibrium is often caused by many universal myths and misconceptions, some are listed here:

### **1. The harder you work the more successful you become.**

This is not always true. If you are the lumber jack who goes on and on, you will not go very far. Stop and sharpen the saw, and get a chain-saw as soon as possible! Later, with your experience, you can employ and train other lumberjacks, and steadily better and expand your business. As you work harder, you should work even smarter, continually improving the value of your time and performance. A labourer exerts 100% of his own effort, while an entrepreneur can harness 75% of 1,000 workers' efforts, and still help them towards a better livelihood. Look at all the clever tools and machinery, they all use mechanical advantage. We should progressively use better leverage and advantage in life, instead of brute strength in sheer drudgery.

**2. High education heightens success.** Over the years, many people without formal education also became immensely successful. I named some of them in previous chapters. High education does not always have an edge, other than those in some high-income jobs, offering expertise and specialities. For many, education unfortunately became a handicap, bringing with it caution, dogmatism, meticulousness, endless consideration and debates. This is liken to a bird that scrutinises a caterpillar all day, instead of going out to catch more delicious worms. The world is not without intellectual and learned derelicts. Mark McCormick said, 'I do not have an innate prejudice against intellect, intelligence... graduate degrees, but they are not substitutes for common sense, people sense, or street smarts.'

**3. You need capital to launch great achievements.** Some of the biggest multi-national companies in the world started with a few thousand dollars. Many

millionaires began with practically nothing. Clever business ideas, creativity, excellent products and services usually flourish. Then the term OPM (other people's minds and money) comes into play. Under ingenious management, other people's talents and skills, and borrowed funds from the bank can build impressive enterprises that offer good products or services in a niche market, providing convenience, value and saving. You can start cheap and small, and carry on from there, using all the success techniques you are learning from me!

**4. Extensive socialising and cultivation of contacts are powerful.** You may think this is the prerequisite for success. This is certainly a good pathway, and is undeniably very good for a career in selling and network marketing; but you must still get results. Never-ending strings of dinners for shoulder-rubbing and the exchange of name cards can be tiring, costly and even unhealthy! Too much partying or parleying saps your energy. You are often better off meeting prospective clients quietly and discussing serious business instead. Believe me, many great and powerful people were loners, with colossal calmness, consistency, concentration and perseverance. They enjoyed the privacy of their family lives, yet they empowered their subordinates towards great productivity and accomplishments. Solitude brings better insight, foresight, creativity, solution for problems, and above all, revival and power.

**5. Being glamorous makes you prosperous.** You may be putting the cart before the horse here. Great success and the resultant glamour came from hard work; ask any movie star or tennis champion. Many sparkling and sophisticated celebrities did not start that way, they laboured first. Besides, if you immersed yourself in glamour you would miss all the unglamorous opportunities that could lead to the glamorous lifestyle you were seeking in the first place! If you were in modelling or show business, it would be a different story of course. There, you need to glitter. If Liberace, Elvis and the Beatles had paraded in tattered clothes, I doubt they would be that successful. On the contrary, a surprising number of successful people enjoy being plain, simple and frugal. It is certainly a lot less cumbersome and stressful. Over the years, Bill Gates and his team at Microsoft were often in jerseys and jeans as they built their gigantic, international computer empire.

**6. Productivity, profit and money are not important.** Money is not everything but it is the main thing for most people. If you are careless about

money, you are likely to overlook the value of time, resources and efficiency. An entrepreneur with that kind of mentality has only one way to go - downhill; he may even end up in bankruptcy. As the world becomes more competitive, respect for productivity, quality, worth and wealth is the backbone for motivation and progress. Around the globe, money is the measure of value and performance and remains the best incentive for work. Rewards are the objects of people's desires and dreams, and bring impetus for achievements.

**7. Creativity is predominantly for the fine arts.** Nothing is further from the truth. Most great business successes showed some forms of creativity. Starting and building a successful undertaking in this competitive world takes much imagination and skills. Look at all the clever enterprises around the world, all the great designs, inventions, products and methods; not forgetting the marvellous tools, cars, toys, books, movies, musicals and songs.

**8. We have to please and empower everybody to be successful.** Surprisingly, many great achievers dare to assert their unpopular position and opposing attitude. It is impossible to please everybody in this world; we do not have that kind of time either. Some people may even envy or upset our progress. That is okay, let us be vigilant and strong, yet humble, empathetic and forgiving. We need not imitate successful people either. Be ourselves and cultivate our unique style and strength.

**9. You need inborn talents to gain wealth.** There is some irony here, with double consolation for you: You do not need talents to be prosperous; nonetheless, everyone has some form of talents. Sadly, many people believe and accept that they lack what it takes to change their lives, to determine their destiny. How wrong can they be! Believe me, you have all you need to be happy and successful.

## Chapter 65 Luck.

John Fool and his wife Jane won \$400,000 in a lottery and was shaking with excitement. They went out with their 2 teenagers and shopped till they dropped, then the couple downed 14 mugs of beer between them. Later they stumbled out of the bar, dribbling, and swaying on both sides of the road to reach the car. The family joked and burst into frenzied laughter. John mumbled and giggled like a small boy in a middle-aged man's body, as he drove on obliviously at a crazy speed. Suddenly their car swerved, hit the curb and bounced into an oncoming van. The thunder from the impact shook the whole neighbourhood. The 2 families of 9 people perished in balls of flame. Thrill turned into tragedy. Bad luck or sheer carelessness? They started with lovely luck remember? such cases are not rare around us - just read the papers!

Each year, there are some 100,000 road deaths world-wide but only about 200 aircraft fatalities. My check on these statistics reconfirms that flying is safer than driving. Again, this is not chance or luck! The meticulousness in the design, manufacture, maintenance and operation of passenger-planes shows an obsession with safety. Invariably, luck has an intimate link with cautiousness. I learned this too well from my own experience, because I suffered much for my over-confidence and recklessness. So do not harbour illusion of control and be caught off-guard. It pays to build your shield against regular problems or sudden mishaps. Prepare for slippery roads and sinking boats, but hope for the best. The successful Donald Trump said, 'I always go into the deal anticipating the worst. If you can plan for the worst - you can live with the worst - the good will always take care of itself.' Mark Twain said it deftly: 'There are two times in a man's life when he should not speculate: When he can't afford it, and when he can.' **Our lesson 1 is: Be cautious and thorough, without a false sense of mastery.**

Andy Ass won \$200,000 in the lotto and was determined to continue his lucky streak and double his money. He spent a day playing with big stakes at the Casino. He lost \$100,000, then \$200,000. His wife persuaded him to leave but he persisted. He had such a run of bad luck that he lost another 50,000 from all of his saving, then another 10,000 that he borrowed from his nephew! Finally he had to pawn his family jewellery to pay his debt. It is often said that a fool and his money

are soon parted. When a man with money meets a man with experience, the experienced man will end up with the money and the other, with the experience! Casinos are very experienced indeed. The little tropical house lizard is cleverer; as you know well, he gives you his detachable tail but keeps his life! Always discard bad luck before it becomes worse luck. Let the tiger have your rope before he gets you. The unlucky ones are often too slow and stubborn to change courses and mitigate their losses. **Lesson 2: Minimise your risks and losses soon, before it is too late.**

Simon Song and his wife Susan were on an early Airbus 330 returning from Hong Kong to Kuala Lumpur. Simon had the instantly-likable, teddy-bear look, and his friendly nature took him around to befriend various passengers. Susan was even friendlier; she was a bird of a woman, full of flutter and twitter. They said hello to a smart businessman, lingered on, and started conversing. The man turned out to be a high-level executive from one of the largest multilevel marketing companies in the world! He had come to survey, then to pave the way for network-marketing company in Malaysia. Simon and Susan liked the idea, after all, their personality had won a large web of contacts everywhere. Soon they signed up as the 1st dealer in the country and recruited hundreds of friends into the business. The new venture boomed and Simon resigned from his old job and went on to build a huge fortune. In real life, I have a friend who has made millions in the same way. He now heads a MLM marketing company in several Asian countries. Whenever you initiate friendship, you boost the number of opportunities popping up and things happening. Furthermore, you gain support, job referrals, even mentors and benefactors. Many who landed in enviable jobs were simply those who had made themselves known to other people. H. Khan, the founder of Hudson Institute said, 'You never know what insight or solution may come to you in unforeseen contacts with people.' **Lesson 3: Form a large network of friendship.**

As opportunities pop up, you must be alert and bold enough to seize them. Louis Pasteur advised, 'Luck favours the mind that is prepared.' Cervantes, the famous French writer noted: 'Anyone who does not know how to handle the most of his luck has no right to complain if it passes him by.' Fortunes swings towards men whose hearts and minds have been prepared to attract them. Do not overlook a whim, glimmer or passing remark! Sadly, most people do not take a second look



at things or turn problems into opportunities. **Lesson 4: Alertness and observance improve your luck.**

Avoid rashness in seizing opportunities, but act with boldness and confidence built on knowledge, experience, wisdom, intuition and calculated risks. Joyce Brothers said, 'Trust your hunches. They're usually based on the facts filed away just below the conscious level.' If you lack courage for action, and insist on certainty and the perfect moment, you tend to paralyse yourself. If you do not take risk you may risk more! Balance boldness with caution. Study situations carefully, weighing the pros and cons before you pick one risk against another, and the amount of risk you are prepared to take; nonetheless, you must reduce risks to the minimal. **Lesson 5: Be bold in taking calculated risks.**

We admire tycoons and champions for their great success but forget the years of toil and perseverance behind it all. Preparation put them at the right time and place for luck to strike. Gary Player assured us: 'The harder you work the luckier you get.' **Lesson 6: Lucky people are hard-working and smart-working people.**

I have seen and heard of many incidents of people who (without expecting returns) helped others. Years later those they had helped became their big benefactors, ushering them into multi-million prosperity. I would love to give you some names here but I could not, out of courtesy. I have also read much about generosity which brought luck and riches. By helping and giving, you gain some kind of divine powers. You have also put the world and God in your debt; you have to be rewarded, and will be sooner or later. **Our 7th and last lesson** is not the least important: **Understand, love, empower and help others.**

In conclusion, we accept that life has both windfalls and misfortunes, but they need not rule us. With our treasure chest of wisdom, knowledge, skills and powerful self-reliance, we can definitely improve our luck and control our lives.

## Chapter 66 Problems and Setbacks.

One weekend long ago, my brother was steering an open boat up a river in Borneo with 18 friends. We were eager to reach the picnicking place, to swim and fish in the sparkling waters of the lush rain forest. Suddenly dark clouds appeared from nowhere; then it rained cats and dogs. Most of us and some of our food were drenched. Surprisingly, my brother enjoyed the punishing wind and rain, as a refreshing downpour. He started singing, and soon he was leading the group into various merry-making songs, with hand-clapping and drumming of cooking utensils. We enjoyed the whole expedition to the end. We could easily have whined and mourned, and filled the rest of the day with anger and anguish, but our response has made heaven of hell! Stephen Covey remarked: 'It's not what happens to us, but our response to what happens to us that hurts us.' Mike Murdock said, 'Winners are not people without any problems. Winners are people who have learned how to overcome their problems.'

In the last chapter we saw that life brings hardship. Let's face it now, because once we bravely look at life in the face, understand and accept it, then its problems are less of a problem. A life without trials and toil is unheard of. F. A. Clark said, 'If you can find a path with no obstacles, it probably does not lead anywhere.' The popular advice-columnist Ann Landers noted: 'Trouble is...an inescapable part of life - proof that you are a card-carrying member of the human race.' If happiness consists of total comfort without worries, then the happiest individual would not be a human, but a hippopotamus, grinning in the mud!

Adversity arises from various causes, like the lack of knowledge, skills, technology, funds, preparation, communication, understanding, acceptance by others, etc. These can be solved with time and efforts. Rapport, exploration of common grounds and win-win situations in fresh and flexible ways bring harmony and solutions. Resistance can be tactfully turned into acceptance. Let us always introspect, and rid ourselves of ill-feelings. Resentments undermine situations, sap our vitality and eat us away! Find the causes of grievances and solve them creatively and objectively.

The best way to leave a problem is to solve it. Here is how: 1. Believe that your problem is solvable, then rest or sleep on it. 2. Study it with a fresh, calm and

clear mind. 3. Look at the picture from a distance, take the puzzle apart into small, understandable and manageable pieces. 4. Ask all kinds of probing, creative and idea-sparkling questions like: Can solutions come from adding, discarding, reducing, mixing or compromising something? (Please refer to Chapter 30.) Creativity is important in problem-solving; many solutions come from fresh, untried ideas. 5. Prayer, meditation, retreat, intuition and the subconscious are producers of solutions. Sometimes a good way to solve a problem is to find some humour in it! Necessity is often the mother of invention; adversity, the father of rebounding efforts or new discoveries!

‘Problems are opportunities in work clothes.’ Said Henry Kaiser. Einstein noted, ‘In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.’ This is so true! If you want a big opportunity, look for a big obstacle. Disappointments spur determination, stumbling blocks turn stepping stones, crises induce creation, setbacks breed sagacity, problems bring possibilities! Creative frustration has brought many things. The difficulty of hearing and seeing people over distance gave birth to the phone and TV. The hardship of coping with accidents and misfortunes built the global multi-billion insurance business. The need to hide or borrow money spurred the colossal banking business. The difficulty of moving people across the world stirred the growth of the mammoth airline industry - which is a multi-million dollar operation every hour! C. Kettering, the American inventor admitted, ‘I could do nothing without problems, they toughen my mind.’

God put us into deep waters, not to be drowned, but to be drilled and strengthened. Hardship toughens us to cope better, as lost battles have taught new ways to win wars. Thousands of great obstacles have been overcome on earth. Should they hamper you? Beethoven was deaf, Solzhenitsyn and Mandela were imprisoned, Ray Charles, Jose Feliciano and Stevie Wonder are blind! If you want to have a rainbow, you must put up with the storm first! No race for any valuable prize could be an easy one. A stumble is not a fall. Every tear has a smile behind it, and setbacks are quickly forgotten. Bad times are not that bad after all, they make us appreciate the good times!

## Chapter 67 Coping with Frustration and Failure.

When Andre Agassi was 16, he flew to a tennis match in Tokyo, with barely enough money to return home. He said, 'It's a big burden - too big, when you don't feel you've enough money to ask for a glass of water.' The next year, after a string of defeats, he virtually gave up tennis. In 1995 he reached the No 1 world ranking. His contract with Nike sports goods alone is worth US\$102 million! Knut Hamsun, a Norwegian immigrant, almost succumbed to endless failures, but he gathered enough strength to pour his desolation into a book aptly entitled *Hunger*. The writing went on to win the Nobel Prize, and showered him with wealth beyond his wildest dreams! John Bunyan and O. Henry were thrown into prison, but soon developed their genius, and became distinguished authors too. Charles Dickens was transformed by the tragedy of his first love into a famous writer. The fabulous Beatles, in their early days as a singing group in Hamburg, lived in hardship inside a windowless room. Julio Iglesias, now a celebrity singer, was a soccer champion until a car crash hospitalised him for 18 months; there he started learning the guitar!

Years ago, a teenager left Bahamas and arrived in New York with only US\$3 in his pocket, and he slept on rooftops. He could hardly read and his attempt at acting failed. He resorted to dish-washing, where he learned day and night with steel-like determination, to read and speak. Finally he became a movie star. Sidney Poitier! In his early days, Sylvester Stallone was rejected hundreds of times, but he trudged on and on, knocking on doors, and finally landed in the big movie *Rocky*. Endless hindrances confronted Helen Reddy, Disney, Spielberg, Soichiro Honda, Thomas Watson, and millions of others. In sales business, great success was achieved by those who were never terrified by the word 'no', instead the word had a strange power that prodded them on. It seemed that their only vocabulary was: Next, and next, and next! All great sportsmen and athletes have also gone through endless hurdles or disappointments, ask any of them.

The outcomes of our lives depend on our ability to tackle frustrations and rejections, even incessant and massive ones. One should keep things in perspective, with powerful optimism. If a person loses his job he may look in the mirror and say: 'I'm an unemployed bum.' He should instead say hopefully, 'Now I can have

opportunities and options!’ Pessimism, self-pity, surrender, and various forms of negativism are life-wasters and destructive agents. Dejection can kill dreams, turn desire into drowsiness, and energy into exhaustion. In tough times, we can either let heartbreaks destroy us or use them to better and strengthen ourselves. Let us embrace disappointments and continuously brainstorm new ways for breaking through. W. Irving noted, ‘Little minds...are subdued by misfortunes; but great minds rise above them.’

Impressive success stories featured people who rose above grave adversity to reach greatness. They plodded on, while others just gave up. ‘Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.’ Observed Oliver Goldsmith. The great Sir Winston Churchill asserted, ‘Kites rise highest against the wind - not with it.’ The capacity for suffering is the prerequisite for greatness, even Jesus Christ suffered; this is the price we all must pay. Remember, diamonds were pieces of coal that evolved under intense heat and pressure.

Failures are only temporary results, they are seldom permanent or conclusive. We are never beaten as long as we are still alive, it is only a matter of time before we turn distress into success. People do not fail, they just give up trying. Denials and impediments are blessings in disguise; the silent work of the Almighty to transform us, to strengthen us and to save us from bigger troubles! Old Chinese sayings remind us to ‘Use retreat to advance.’ and that ‘To be the greatest of men, you must suffer the bitterest of bitter.’ Retreat and retrospection enable us to learn from disappointments and setbacks, to adopt better strategies and actions, even to set new goals. The man who adheres to his wisely chosen course, and presses forward smartly regardless of obstacles, will succeed. If he is endlessly resourceful, he can weather any storm. He could build a house with the stones that people throw at him!

The great inventor Edison was asked why he kept trying to make a new type of battery after failing so often. His answer was: ‘I have no failures. Now I know 50,000 ways it won’t work!’ Everywhere, people are handicapped by circumstances, cheated and battered by others, floored by illness and accidents, overwhelmed by grief and misfortune, yet they burst through with triumph and glory. Here are their tactics, adopt them:

1. Keep your eyes on your dreams & destination with faith and will-power. Believe success is yours in a matter of time. Never give up. Get up one more

time than being knocked down.

2. Have powerful and total confidence in your inner strength.
3. Find good and happiness everywhere, even little relief, solace, attractions or rewards. Look for the silver lining.
4. No negativism & self-pity; conserve energy for life's battles.
5. Affirm your self-worth, self-image, talents and calibre.
6. Adapt to change, keep brainstorming, knocking and stepping.
7. Reach out, especially for relationships that enrich your life.
8. Focus outwards, help others and get assistance in return.
9. Tackle all hurdles with complete optimism and gamesmanship.
10. Have a fierce desire to face & tackle experience and to learn from it.

Someday, a sudden or threatening change may rock your world. Do not be afraid of strange or difficult situations. Counteract or adapt to whatever faces you. If you try your best to overcome obstacles, you will emerge smarter and stronger. If you can thrive in a crisis, you become a professional human being, you can flourish anywhere, anytime! One day you will be glad about those rude awakenings and stumbling blocks. Trials and tribulations often force the door of opportunity! Napoleon Hill asserted: 'Every adversity, every failure and every heartache carries with it the seed of an equivalent or a greater benefit.' If you do not surmount difficulty and make an effort, you will not go beyond where you are now, you may even fall behind. Let your frustration spur you towards greater achievement and power. Sweet revenge!

Ernest Hemingway noted, 'The world breaks everyone and afterwards many are strong at the broken places.' Thomas Watson wrote, 'Failure is a teacher - a harsh one, perhaps, but the best...You've got to put failure to work for you...that's where you will find success.' Surmount your temporary setbacks, you will be wiser and tougher persons after the ordeals. When you win eventually, it will be the greatest triumph in your life! I know victory is awaiting you.

## Chapter 68 Stress, Worry, Fear and Depression.

In the modern rat-racing and dog-eat-dog society, stress is now a widespread problem. It can brew disorders and diseases, even mental illness. Long periods of stress can cause anxiety, fear, depression, nervous breakdown and lead to self-destructive behaviour like smoking, alcoholism, obesity, drugs or even suicide. Stress is dangerous; it must be nipped in the bud. One day, you may suffer and strain under its weight. This lesson is the cream of stress-fighters, and ensures you will walk away scot-free and happy.

**Recognise the symptoms of stress.** The common symptoms are: Tension, nervousness, irregular breathing and heart-beat, indigestion, insomnia, fear, emotions of discord and being tied-in-knots, a lack of self-esteem and concentration, and a perceived loss of control and stability. Anxiety and depression are common complaints, so are panic attacks, phobias, even feelings of oncoming doom and insanity.

**The causes of stress.** Coping with stress is easier if you know your exact causes. Frustrations, resentment, anger, hurt, grudge, guilt, aimlessness, loneliness, setbacks, failures, losses and crisis are all roots of stress; so are changes in job, residence and life-style, and the lack of rest, exercise and nutrition. The following are internal and external remedies; you can vary and fine-tune the cures to suit yourself.

### **A. The internal remedies:**

1. Change your attitude. See life in the right, healthy perspectives. Say to yourself: 'This is the only life I have. I won't get a second chance. I accept that there're things I can change and things I can't change, but there're endless opportunities to have fun, achievement and wealth and I am entitled to them.' Marcus Aurelius stated, 'If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.' Gratitude and contentment play a beautiful part, cultivate them as replacements for envy, covetousness, greed and spite.

2. Find a new meaning and purpose in life. Dream new dreams and set some compelling yet reachable goals. Work up a burning desire, even an obsession for

something; these are stress-busters. Put immediate stops to destructive, negative feelings. If you truly believe that life is worth living, your belief will materialise. Focus and determination come with purpose; they provide commitment and propelling power to reach your goals, sending lethargy and hopelessness out the window.

3. Fortitude. This is often the first step to conquer stress. Boost your courage. Look at fear in the face, confront it, analyse it, tear it apart, restore your faith fully, and develop a powerful sense of control. Fear comes from a belief of powerlessness, never amplify this by underrating yourself and expecting the worst to happen. Instead, prepare yourself well mentally and physically, for any situation. Use visualisation and affirmation to boost your confidence, while you kick the habits of worry and aimlessness. Norman V. Peale, the famous motivator said, 'Fear is never a reason for quitting; it is only an excuse.' Shakespeare wrote: 'Cowards die many times before their deaths.'

4. Love and warmth. The importance of affection and attachment is best illustrated by Robert Holden when he wrote, 'All forms of stress and illness are lessons in love. They are consequential symptoms of an absence or lack of love, either for yourself, for others or from others.' With love come altruism and charity; loving, giving and helping boosts the feeling of self-worth and usefulness. So do a good deed a day, it keeps stress away! Besides, human contacts and fun-sharing have great healing powers. In life, there are bound to be incidents of misunderstanding and hurt; please ensure that you have not misinterpreted something, or given it the wrong priority and weight. Give others the benefit of the doubt and let things rest, or express your grievances tactfully to the persons involved and get things off your chest. It is best to look wider, further and more permanently at various issues. Resentment is self-punishment. We all get hurt or rejected sometimes, and we often exaggerate our wounds and brood over them, hurting ourselves more in the process, how petty and silly can we get!

5. Inquisitiveness and curiosity. See and find good everywhere. Love the unknown and unexpected. Make discoveries.

6. Desire and passion. Create and kindle them, and do not start a day without them; they add zeal, zest and zing to your life.

7. Music, relaxation and short power-naps. These inputs are powerful enough to erase much of the disharmony and depression in people. For ages, music



has been known as a potent healing force, so are meditation and relaxation, which I will discuss soon.

8. Nutrition, rest and vitality. Vitamin Bs, good nutrition from a variety of fresh foods etc, all reduce stress and anxiety. Nervousness is also a result of exhaustion. The *Desiderata* taught us: ‘Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Do not distress yourself with imaginings.’

9. Cheerfulness, humour and optimism. Live pleurably and exude joy to those around you. It tells your subconscious you are in control and ready for any of life’s challenge. Conversely, worry is the greatest waste of time, energy and happiness. We can spend our whole life worrying and it will not change a thing! Most of what we worry will never happen, and experts estimate this at 90%; most of the remainders are things we cannot change! For those we can change, divide and conquer them, one at a time. William R. Inge declared: ‘Worry is interest paid on trouble before it comes due.’ Hope and optimism are real necessities. Edmund Burke urged, ‘Never despair, but if you do work on in despair.’

10. Visualisation, affirmation and prayer. Stress is largely created in the mind, and the mind can clear it. Pleasant memories, images and anticipation, boosted by regular affirmation and prayer can do wonders. Say this frequently: ‘God, you are my constant guiding companion, you are filling me with clarity, courage, contentment, calm and control.’

## **B. The external remedies:**

Start the day well, with gratitude for being given another day to shine and succeed. Look forward to enjoy the day; schedule fun and events. Take nice walks and go jungle trekking. Stretch and breathe fully and deeply. Jog and exercise regularly. Take a bubble bath. Tidy up and beautify your home and office; harmony and beauty are most soothing and relaxing. Make thorough work preparation that brings confidence and accomplishments. Reward and pamper yourself. Do all the things that you enjoy doing, without compromising on your morals of course. Memorise and share jokes; laughter increases levels of endorphins that ease pain and fight diseases. Cuddle and tickle a baby. Enjoy all the good music you can lay hands on; play the piano or learn a new song. Play games and read engrossing books. Bring in plants and flowers; start an aquarium, keep pets and pretty singing birds. Begin a hobby. Look for novelty; change your

environment if necessary. Move out of the past into a refreshing future. Look ahead with delightful anticipation. Reach out to family members and friends, there are also caring people everywhere. Talk, laugh, play, and learn from others.

Barbara Johnson said, 'Worry is wasting today's time to clutter up tomorrow's opportunities with yesterday's troubles.' When you worry, you are suffering before, and more than it is necessary! Few things in life are worth worrying about. Only a soldier in battle has any cause for concern. Even then, the worst outcome is getting killed, by then he would have nothing to worry about! Much fear and worry is caused by the imagination. They are later discovered to be a waste of time, so don't make a pastime of it, it is a wicked substitute for action and a poor excuse for laziness and lack of accomplishment.

Life is too short for fretting, so change your disturbing habits quickly. Depression feeds on procrastination and self-pity, activity is its best exterminator. A good cure for it is its instant substitution with pleasant, winning images of the past and the future. The idle mind is the devil's workshop, and the best solution for slump and gloom is hard work. Let stress motivate you instead. Hard work makes happy people. When you do positive and purposeful things, you will not think of negative ones.

The capacity to take misfortune and to make something good out of it is a rare talent, but this can be developed. You can begin by spending some time to watch and emulate the little sunbird or hummingbird outside your window. It is perpetually busy, looking left and right, singing, searching, exploring and enjoying its life to the fullest. It has no time for anything negative. For me, I only need to wake up with this line that sends stress packing and running away: 'I want to enjoy and progress every minute of this day!'

## Chapter 69 Courage.

If the average people were asked which traits they admired most in their heroes, many would say bravery and gallantry in the conquest of great danger and hardships. Someone immediately comes to my mind here: He was a school dropout, then he went bankrupt at his little store and spent 15 years paying off debts. He lost 18 elections, was afflicted with physical problems, attacked by the press and despised by half the nation. He finally became the U.S. President. His term was the bloodiest period in the country's history. He went through everything with sheer fortitude. He was none other than... the great Abraham Lincoln!

An intimate link exists between courage and well-being. Courage brings enterprise, self-confidence, a sense of daring, mastery, etc, which cure the cold feet. It is developed through tough experience and training, coupled with in-depth knowledge, personal alertness and competence. Regular visualisation, affirmation, meditation and prayer help tremendously. Valour is not the absence of fear, but rather the conquest of it. Kill your fear, make it disappear. To me fear is often **False Evidence Appearing Real**. The moment we are afraid of something, we give it power over us, but the minute we summon courage, we begin busting the ghost of cowardice. Our perception, previously clouded and chilled by apprehension, is altered. We snarl at fear in the face and say: 'I'll settle with you NOW!' The emphasis on now, instead of past and future, and on facts rather than fiction, is powerful. Try it!

In the business world, courage is a superb ingredient. Regine, the business magnate said, 'I refuse failure. I never give up.' Victor Kiam, the President of Remington Corporation stressed: 'To succeed in the world, remember these three maxims: Entrepreneurs are risk-takers, willing to roll the dice with their money or reputations on the line in support of an idea or enterprise.' The successful Estee Lauder announced, 'Risk-taking is the cornerstone of empires.' Fearlessness and adventure are parts of an eventful and fruitful life. Would you like to look back one day with regrets and say; 'Oh, if I had only done that.'?

Fortitude is a sublime form of courage, with the added capacity to suffer, accommodate, adapt, and win ultimately. The qualities and blessings that come with it have many facets: The abilities to take calculated risks, to overcome fear

and failure, to surmount sudden crisis or misfortune, to stand up for rights, righteousness and convictions, to pursue self-determination as well as noble and independent goals. The reputable Dr Maxwell Maltz said, 'If you fail you must find the courage within yourself to pick up the pieces and go on.' Hal Borland supplemented this beautifully: 'No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn.'

Helen Keller, the blind and deaf writer remarked, 'Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.' Dale Carnegie urged us: 'Take a chance! All of life is a chance. The man who goes furthest is generally the one who is willing to do and dare.' Consider how much we could do, and reap in life, if we would only try? A lack of courage means little accomplishment, if any. Alfred de Musset, the famous French writer wrote: 'To see is to know; to desire is to be able to; to dare is to have.' Life is challenging, it demands bravery to risk defeat, and to fight for the good life. If many others can do it, you can do it; go on and carry the mark of human greatness!

"If you attempt the ridiculous you can achieve the impossible." - Anonymous.

"All problems become smaller if, instead of indulging them, you confront them. Touch a thistle timidly and it pricks you; grasp it boldly, and its spines crumble." - William S. Halsey.

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." - F. D. Roosevelt.

"I never allow any difficulties. The great secret of being useful and successful is to admit of no difficulties." - Sir George Gipps.

"When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters - one represents danger, and the other represents opportunity." - J. F. Kennedy.

"Winning without danger means triumph without glory." - Corneille.

## Chapter 70 Relaxation and Meditation.

Success, health and happiness require that we relieve ourselves from the stress and strain of daily living. We can do this by putting aside a quiet hour each day for relaxation, which benefits from the intimate mind-body relationship. The mind and body mirror each other, so we can use our physical disposition to alter our spiritual condition, and vice versa. Breathing for example, an integral part of relaxation, is affected by the state of mind, yet it can influence the mental state in return! On the whole, relaxation is a built-in tranquilliser, and it can untangle and enhance various aspects of our lives. Ashleigh Brilliant said, ‘Some-times the most urgent and vital thing you can possibly do is to take a complete rest.’ Now let us look at the techniques for relaxation:

Start by doing stretching exercise with the muscles of your neck, waist and limbs, then sit or lie comfortably in a pleasant place. Take regular and deep breathing, then begin auto-suggestion that repeats the following: ‘All my irritations, resentment, worries are evaporating away, and I am reconciled with everything and everyone in this universe. My eyelids are heavy... my whole body is limp and relaxed... my face, neck, arms, hands, chest, stomach, legs, feet are relaxed... all my muscles are relaxed, all the way to my finger tips and toes... my heartbeats and breathing are so easy and effortless... nothing can disturb my deep relaxation now... my whole being is calm...’

Hobbies are good substitutes and supplements to this resting exercise; they have relaxing and reviving effects. Examples are: reading, listening to music, tending the flowers, bird-watching in the woods and walks on the beach. Another alternative or extension to relaxation is meditation.

What is meditation? Meditation expands observation, creativity and the ability to see meaning in life. It is a journey, an unfolding world, to show one’s undiscovered potentials. Beautiful events are recalled and successful outcomes are foreseen. It is different from trance, hypnosis, visualisation, reflection and falling asleep, instead it keeps an alert and attentive mind with heightened consciousness. It is not an escape from reality, but rather a greater awareness of the world. It is a deliberate and natural undertaking, an act of will, not temperament. We can also indulge in spontaneous meditation, in a natural setting where we are drawn to the

experience. Most religions have meditation techniques to establish and deepen our spiritual well-being; initiating growth in virtues, harmony and human capacity. This practice is more deeply entrenched in society than we normally realise. Aldous Huxley wrote, 'Meditation has been used in every part of the world and from the remotest periods, as a method for acquiring knowledge about the essential nature of things.'

What then are the benefits of meditation? Its usefulness is now widely accepted, and some 6,000 doctors in USA prescribe meditation therapy. Various studies and medical reports show that it lowers blood pressure, reduces irritability, negativism, stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, stuttering, addiction, phobias and even chronic pain. Increases in feelings of self-worth, identity, independence, emotional freedom, optimism, peace, creativity, memory, concentration, energy and productivity were documented. Meditation changes and improves the way we view things, sharpens insight, and unifies our dispersed emotions and spirits. The more clearly we see the harsh realities of life, the better we are in dealing with them. As meditative people we tend to be more thoughtful, sensitive, more creative and compassionate. We can stop, start or calm our mind at will! Silence allows better insight into difficulties and dilemmas. We can introspect, retrospect, identify our weaknesses, inconsistency and errors, then clarify and strengthen our moral values.

Through meditation we have a choice, to make ourselves what we really are or should be, allowing better self-help and development. In the process, cloudiness turns to clarity, aggression to ambition, fear to fortitude. We're no longer victims, but masters, with the ability to relate and co-ordinate with focus and vision. This brings self-discovery, a new outlook and provides awakening and insight in our perception and actions. Other benefits include: Solutions to problems; freedom from worry, fear and anxiety; understanding and empathy for others; enlightenment, contentment, bliss, youthfulness and even intuition and psychic powers. We dive deeply into the conscious and subconscious to come up with 'gems and treasures'. We can scrutinise what is going on, both in the outside world and inside ourselves. As life becomes more coherent, both understanding and meaningfulness develop; things take on more significance and life becomes richer. Later, the meditation session can be extended into our daily routine, allowing the benefits of meditation to fill and enrich a wider sphere of our lives.

How is meditation done? Basic meditation is available to anyone who wants it. You do not need spiritual faith or tutors, only the desire, the topic and the discipline to do it regularly. Basically, it is the focusing of the mind on a single subject of your choice, other distractions are filtered out. Sit comfortably in a quiet place and concentrate on 'being me' and observe things with detachment, objectivity and a clearer perspective. You may use more involvement and subjectivity at will, for greater benefits in the areas of happiness and success. Your self-talk may go along the following line: 'I am in complete rhythm, flow, and harmony with myself, my environment and the universe. All the peace, contentment, intuition, sage, prudence and power are within me.'

Some words of caution here: Too much meditation that runs into several hours a day may detach the meditator from the reality of life and bring illusion. An hour of relaxation, and half an hour of meditation a day is ideal. Meditation must cultivate the right attitude, values, virtues, and bring wisdom and well-being. It is hard to go through life as a tense and tired person. So begin now, other things will follow and fall in place, and you will benefit from the tranquillity and changes in your life, and create a first-class future.

"Time must be found for relaxation or you would break down nervously." - Al Koran.

"When we cannot bear to be alone, it means we do not properly value the only companion we will have from birth to death - ourselves." - E. Le Shan.

"You have to stop in order to be able to change direction." - Erich Fromm, psychoanalyst.

"If you make friend with yourself, you will never be alone." - Dr M. Maltz.

## Chapter 71 The Power of Prayer.

In countless incidents around the world, people received intelligent and powerful directions that led to success, as a result of their prayer. Over the years, people have prayed in moments of great emergencies, conflicts, danger and life-threatening illness and have been answered. Take for instance the experience of Mrs Liz Thomas, as told by C. Hyatt and L. Gottlieb in their book *Why Smart People Fail*. After her husband's business failures, she resorted to praying every morning. She kept hearing the 3 words: 'Make the mustard.' Shortly, the couple embarked on their mustard-making business, based on their Russian recipe, and soon their business flourished! C. B. DeMille, the American movie director admitted, 'I have found the greatest power in the world in the power of prayer. There is no shadow of doubt of that. I speak from my own experience.' Our celebrity lady Oprah confessed, 'Not a day goes by that I don't say, thank you. I am truly blessed.'

A study on dozens of leukaemia children at McGill University, Canada, for example, revealed that 90% of those who prayed lived longer than usual, but only 37% of those who did not pray did! At various medical schools and hospitals around the world, tests showed that those who prayed, or were prayed for, had fewer symptoms and better recovery rates.

In 1986 Dr Randy Byrd reported an interesting American experiment in *The Medical Tribune*. Hospital patients of similar ages and conditions were split into 2 groups. The first group was prayed for by various prayer-groups; the second group was not. The result showed that the 1st group suffered less: Only 3 needed antibiotics as against 16; only 6 suffered pulmonary edema, compared to 18; and none needed intubation treatment, as against 12 in the 2nd group! Alexis Carrel, the Nobel Prize-winning surgeon, noted that by praying, 'We link ourselves with the inexhaustible power that spins the universe.'

The Reverend Father Emiliano Tardif is a Catholic priest who has worked in the Dominican Republic for over 30 years. In his book *Jesus Lives Today!* - sold half a million copies in 14 languages - he admitted his scepticism in miraculous healing, until a prayer group cured him of acute pulmonary tuberculosis. From thereon he became involved dynamically in prayer and healing groups across the



Republic and overseas. His book gave numerous vivid accounts of conversion, deliverance and incredible healing.

Then there is St. Stephen's Church in downtown Philadelphia, USA, featured in Stanley High's *The Healing Power of Prayer*. The church held almost weekly healing-by-prayer sessions for 22 years, which benefited thousands of people physically, mentally and spiritually. Endless strings of letters were received, conveying gratitude; but none expressed any disappointment! One doctor commented: 'I have seen too much of the power of prayer in healing to doubt what are sometimes called 'miracles' do happen.' Mr Herbert Hoover, 31st President of USA, echoed this: 'The force of prayer is greater than any possible combination of man-controlled powers, because prayer is man's greatest means of tapping the infinite resources of God.'

It is now clear that prayer earns one or more of the following: 1. Favour, help and blessing from God. 2. Faith, belief, confidence and desire that resonate, expand and propagate special healing powers and progress. 3. The development of a powerful form of auto-suggestion, affirmation, conditioning and positive thinking. Here, an idea develops a stimulating internal force, and is coddled and crystallised towards an objective.

The more fervently and frequently you pray, the more powerful the words become because when confidence and beliefs are compounded, they make an even mightier swaying power. In many cases prayers alone do not change things, but they can change people, and consequently people change things!

Praying is our only channel of communication with our Creator, the path to sources of infinite power and grace. It brings us in touch with something larger than ourselves, something that makes the universe divine and endless. It remains the greatest agent for rebirth and renewal. Successes in many areas of human pursuits have materialised through prayer, which unfailingly provides poise, purpose, patience, peace and power. Alexis Carrel, French biologist and Nobel Prize winner declared: 'Prayer is the most powerful form of energy one can generate...a force as real as terrestrial gravity. It supplies us with a flow of sustaining power in our daily lives.'

Even Jesus prayed. He pleaded before his crucifixion: 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me...Not as I will, but as You will.' George Santayana noted, 'It is not the lazy who are most inclined to prayer; those who pray most who care

most...’ So reach out to God often and relate to Him in your own way. Use your own words, as long as they express love and respect. Give thanks when you rise, and before every meal. Listen for guidance, ask for blessings and receive love, inspiration, courage, strength and bliss. Do not just ask for more, ask for wisdom to make better use of your resources, and ask for the opportunities to serve your loved ones and your fellowmen. Ask to be His instruments to bring love, and well-being to the world. Apart from the famous and universal *The Lord’s Prayer*, the *Our Father*, I have made up an example for you, here it is: ‘Almighty God, Heavenly Father, I thank You deeply for everything you’ve given me. Please forgive me for my sins and grant me continuous protection and good health, so I can do good work on earth. Please bless me emotionally, mentally and spiritually, and fill me with your light, love, truth, wisdom, joy, grace and peace, so that I can impart the same to my fellowmen...’

“I sought the lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.” - Psalm 34:4.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” - One of the 8 Beatitudes, the New Testament.

“So long as you can pray when all the world has gone awry, ...So long as you can cling to hope when luck has passed you by, ...You will come out smiling in the end.” - Patience Strong.

“During our short span of life we must find our own insights into our relationship with the existence in which we participate so briefly. It means a reawakening of the spiritual world, of our inner life, of religion. I don't mean religion as a dogma or as a church, but as a vital feeling.” - Boris Pasternak.

“Pray as if everything depended on God, and work as if everything depended upon man.” - Archbishop Francis J. Spellman.

## Chapter 72 A Fresh View, Optimism and Humour.

Life has shown that hardship causes people to think, and a crisis can lead people to a new perspective. Michael Stern noted, 'A dead end is one of the strongest motivations for making people look elsewhere. It is the good people that leave the sinking ship, and the dead wood that stays.' E. Hall prompted us, 'If your spirits are low, do something; if you have been doing something, do something different.' We must change our perception before we can change ourselves, and we must change ourselves before we can change our lives! Hope, cheer and a new outlook can work wonders, not only in uprooting our negative and destructive emotions, but in whisking us off to health and wealth.

Albert Einstein remarked: 'The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.' Thus, it is important to have a fresh picture, a new angle, a closer look, a distant panorama, or even a view through other people's eyes! If the sight is through the glasses of hope, optimism and positive thinking, it is even better. To have that, we must believe that no failure is final, that our limitations are imaginary, and that change can come in an instant. No one can judge our future from here! A. Schopenhauer, philosopher and scientist agreed: 'Whatever fate befalls you, do not give way to... great lamentation... All things are full of change, and your fortunes may turn at any given moment.' Even if it doesn't, you can speed up change by playing up a pressing or painful situation; there, you have no choice but to change!

You cannot change the past, but you can act on the present and create a better future. Don't let what you cannot do hinder what you can do. There is no future in keeping the past! The philosopher Epictetus wrote: 'He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.' Watch out, regret over the past and fear of the future are thugs robbing us of the present. Happy, winning people only look ahead; they live for now, and hereafter.

Addington, who counselled over 20,000 people wrote in *100 Per Cent Mind Power* that 'Whenever a person was willing to change his thinking, giving new conscious direction to his subconscious mind, there was an immediate change in his outer experience.' Emerson noted: 'To the dull mind all nature is leaden. To

the illuminated mind, the whole world burns and sparkles with light.’ Often our problem lies not in the thing itself but in the way we evaluate it. M. de Chazal mused, ‘When indifferent the eye takes still photographs; when interested, movies.’ Let us see movies! Keep our hopeful eyes on the future, while we live and progress cheerfully in the present. We have to change to grow, even to be reborn, let us do it now, with optimism.

Do not underrate the might of optimism. Optimism draws great results, while pessimism brings bad ones. This is the mind’s amazing power over matter. Some psychologists did a research on insurance sales agents, and they found that among experienced ones the positive-thinkers sold 37% more insurance than the negative ones! The Company under study then recruited more optimistic candidates and the results were affirmative. Studies have also confirmed that optimistic people are healthier and more resistant to disease, which is not surprising. D. Bonhoeffer, the German theologian wrote: ‘The essence of optimism is... a source of inspiration, of vitality and hope where others have resigned.’ Now let’s learn from a first class optimist here:

1. The superior optimist is cheerful in all situations, even when he cannot be really happy. He generates love in his life, and spreads fun and good news.
2. He assumes control of his life and his future, believing he has limitless potentials for stretching and achieving.
3. He is proactive and he anticipates difficulties. When things go wrong he acts promptly and gathers resources to surmount his predicaments.
4. He looks for the good in bad situations and shuns negative thoughts, instead he visualises and rehearses success.
5. He is well-prepared and is seldom baffled by problems. He accepts things that cannot be changed. Nonetheless, he is realistic and he looks for options, solutions, renewal, growth, and not perfectionism.

The pessimist falls miserably on the other side of the fence, full of sad stories, wrecks and ruins. In worse cases, a pessimist may fear failure and dwell on it so much that he becomes nervous, phobic and neurotic, and fails conclusively. That is why almost half of world’s illnesses are now psychosomatic - where the mind expects and generates the sickness! Dr Joseph Murphy, in his great book *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind* tells us about a happy and robust relative of his, who visited a fortune-teller in India and was told he would die at the next new moon. This man accepted it completely, became obsessed about his oncoming

death, told everyone about it and made preparations. Guess what? He died as predicted. Elvis Presley believed that he would die at the age of 43 like his mother; he did too! Their minds had prepared their bodies for the demise, with hopelessness. B. Siegel's encouraging line to us is 'In the face of uncertainty, there is nothing wrong with hope.'

Hope is a prerequisite for everyone trudging on life's tough journey. It is a great stimulant that brings cheer, optimism, energy and enthusiasm. The proverbs say, 'While there's life, there's hope.' 'Where one door shuts another opens.' Clare B. Luce, the American writer stressed: 'There are no hopeless situations; there are only men who have grown hopeless about them.' Barbara Johnson the humorist writer chimed: 'An optimist laughs to forget; the pessimist forgets to laugh... A pessimist has no starter, an optimist has no brakes.'

It is easy to smile when things are going well, but the time to be cheery is when you are world-weary and war-torn. A sense of humour is a great blessing that drives away all kinds of troubles, big and small. Laughter is indeed the best medicine and the fastest way to dissolve sadness and anger. Remember Norman Cousins, who cured his terminal illness with laughter? Often the best way to solve a problem is to find some humour in it! Jokes, jest and joy boost our ability to harmonise with others, bringing sunshine to all. W. M. Thackeray observed: 'Good humour may be said to be one of the best articles of dress one can wear in society.' A jocund nature lifts self-esteem and staves off fear, frustration and depression. Washington Irving wrote, 'An inexhaustible good nature is one of the most precious gifts of heaven, spreading itself like oil over the troubled sea of thought, and keeping the mind smooth and equable in the roughest weather.'

In concluding I beg you to etch 4 points on your mind: 1. Take a fresh look, dwell on today's opportunities, not yesterday's blunders. You can't go back, but you can begin now to make a new and smashing future. 2. Love today, it is the first day of the rest of your life. Love yourself. In this world you are the most important person to yourself! 3. Be an optimist always, but not a lazy one who neither worry nor work. Take action, move ahead of the crowd, go the extra mile and build a beautiful life ahead. 4. Happiness is something you must carry with you wherever you go. If you have it inside you, you can easily find it everywhere. Cheer turns a dish into a feast! It makes a world of difference. The trick is to make the best of life and the most of it.

“Learn to see backwards, inside out and upside down.” - J. Heider.

“The foolish and dead alone never change their opinion.” - J. Lowell.

“One of the best things people can have up their sleeves is a funny bone.” - Richard L. Weaver II.

“Common sense and a sense of humour are the same thing moving at different speeds. A sense of humour is just common-sense, dancing.” - Cliff James.

“Humour is a prelude to faith and laughter is the beginning of prayer.” - Reinhold Niebuhr.

“We cherish our friends not for their ability to amuse us, but for ours to amuse them.” - Evelyn Waugh.

“A smile is the beginning of wisdom.” - Dr. Maxwell Marx.

“The art of medicine consists of amusing the patient while nature cures the disease.” - Voltaire.

“Humour is the spice of life... makes us tolerant, and keeps us gay and young... If you have a sense of humour you will always find something to amuse you when the world has proved unkind.” - Patience Strong.

“Life is too short to tackle without a sense of humour. With it, you can place any seemingly large problem in its proper perspective and laugh about it.” - Robert L. Shook.

## Chapter 73 Self-Healing.

We have just concluded that you are the most important persons to yourself. You must take superb care of your mind and body, before you can take care of others. Let us have a contingency, in case someday you plunge into the depths of failure, sorrow and illness. You need not give in, you can recover, rise and shine again. Everyone must now learn self-healing which supplements and even substitutes medication in curing many ills, especially the psychosomatic ones. Do-your-own healing gives us an active role in recovery. Samuel Smiles noted: 'The spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual... Help from without is often enfeebling in its effects, but help from within invariably invigorates.' Let us rise above sickness and surrender, every cell in our bodies is programmed to fight for life. Research has also shown that our minds and faith are so potent that they can even reverse the real effects of prescribed medicine!

There is a man in West Malaysia who has busted ghosts from houses and exorcised spirits from people for many years. Now he confesses that it was all a hoax, toying with bottles, red scarves and chanting names of Japanese motorbikes backwards. Yamaha and Suzuki sounded like ahamay and ikuzus! In most cases, faith on the part of his clients was the panacea and cure-all.

In Canada, John Kehoe in his great book *Mind Power* gave several amazing cases of healing by the mind. One involved Martin Brofman, who was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He resorted to meditation and visualisation that focused intently on the tumour, and imagined it being reduced, dispersed, then excreted away. Two months later, the doctor found no trace of the disease left! Kehoe also reported a special visualisation programme ran by Dr Carl Simonton and his colleagues at Fort Worth, USA, which attained 3 to 4 times the average cure rate for cancer!

There are many more reports of faith-healing in various places. Experts in PNI (Psycho-neuro-immunity) research has hard evidence showing the intimate communication that exists between the brain and the immune system. Two Professors, A. Goldstein and N. Hall of George Washington Medical School found that the brain directs the immune system through a family of hormones called thymosins! No wonder that the father of medicine Hippocrates wrote: 'The Mind is

a great healer.’ Dr Albert Schweiter added, ‘The real doctor is the doctor within.’

Then there is hypnotism, another area of intrigue. Bodily symptoms have been found to surface among hypnotised people merely as a result of suggestion! These symptoms include sneezing, allergy, chill, fever, injury and paralysis. Dr J. Murphy in his wonderful book *The Power Of Your Subconscious Mind* reported that Bernheime, a French medical professor has produced blisters on people by suggestion, aided by make-believe items. Other experts have done the same in hypnosis, where symptoms appeared when the mind was made to believe something.

If the mind can draw illness, it can cure it too! Remember the healing effects of the dummy placebo pills? Among such widespread non-medicinal healing in the world, the underlying cause is the subconscious, the mind-body relationship, and the might of faith, hope, love and spirituality. The subconscious can be tailored at will, by beliefs, imagery, auto-suggestion, affirmation, etc. Isn’t this good news? Let us learn self-healing now:

**First, have courage, determination and mastery.** Eleanor Roosevelt wrote, ‘You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience by which you really stop to look fear in the face.’ Anyone can rebuild his life if he believes he can and if he only wants to. Mastery means the ability to command situations and outcomes, saying things like: ‘I now break through and decree these miseries to get out of my life!’ Research shows that fighters against diseases stand better chance of winning and recovery, so let us wield fortitude, confidence and self-esteem.

**Next, excellent mental attitude.** A good mental attitude is paramount and it strengthens the body’s healing mechanism. Stephen Covey put it beautifully, ‘It is not what others do or even our own mistakes that hurt us the most; it is our response to those things. Chasing after the poisonous snake that bites us will only drive the poison through our entire system. It is far better... to get the poison out.’ Be grateful for everything you have, gratitude can even mend a broken heart. Look for reasons to be thankful, search for something meaningful, seize every little incident of joy and flicker of hope. Put more trust in yourself and others. Faith boosts your strength and stability.

**Have tolerance.** Have patience and perseverance to the end. In your disappointment remember the wonder of dualism: You lose one thing, you gain



another. Something is denied, another thing takes its place. A door shuts, another opens.

**Believe in miracles.** They will happen when you do everything beneficial for your health, emotional, mental and spiritual well-being. The concerted efforts and their synergy will ensure your recovery. Build a powerful conviction that you can grow beyond what is wrong, and be reborn, not just once but successively. Employ visualisation; mental pictures are as powerful as words. Everyday, submerge yourself in thoughts of great health and let them seep and permeate every tissue and cell. Say to yourself: ‘Every minute, every bit of me is getting better and better...’ Go to the extent of believing that your illness is baseless, unfounded and imaginary, this will subdue or even dissolve it.

Anyway, all forms of healing come from God, whether through medicine, prayer or mind power, or all combined. Patience Strong commented, ‘Surgeons do their skilful job, but nature does the miracle.’ So pray often and say: ‘No matter how tough things are I am with me and God is guarding me and healing me.’

**Love yourself, love others and gain affection.** Reach out to your loved ones, your confidantes and your friends. Return to the world of enthusiasm and laughter. Help others, thereby healing yourself. Dr Carl Menninger proclaimed, ‘Love cures people - both the ones who give it and the ones who receive it.’ According to the Sophocles in 406 BC, ‘One word frees us from the weight and pain of life: The word is love.’

**Forgive yourself and everyone else.** We all have imperfections, we are only humans, not God. If you have done wrong, admit it and promise not to do it again. You are the one who will gain immensely from forgiving. If others hurt your feeling, it is not important unless you persist in remembering it. The best remedy is simply to forgive and forget, look ahead with new plans, pleasant things, delightful dreams and fantasies.

**Improve your state and disposition.** Good postures and expressions, even a forced smile can do wonders, I will discuss these later. Expand your joy and enthusiasm, and see the funny side of things. Laughter is an excellent cure for a broken heart. Explore new ways of thinking and doing things. A long-term study by sociologist James House in Michigan, USA found that socially active, married people live longer than inactive single ones. Other studies also confirmed that cheerful, optimistic people have better health and immunity. Keep busy, it is

another cure that makes you happier. Have rebirth in a new setting, a mountain retreat, or at a sentimental, long-lost childhood place; your life will never be the same again! Dr B. S. Siegel wrote, 'Joy is a choice. Be grateful for being alive. Do not wait for a happy day. Everyday is that day. Tell yourself: I will have pain but I will use it.'

**Use meditation, massage and music.** Please visit the library and read on self-hypnosis, Japanese Shiatsu finger-pressure therapy, ancient Chinese massage, herbal and alternative medicines; they all add to your arsenal against sickness. Psychologists confirm the effectiveness of hypnosis in pain relief, self-healing and control of bad habits and disorders. The therapeutic benefits of music are widely accepted and documented in medical journals. Dr R. E. Kasayka at Lutheran Hospital in Illinois, USA, who uses music therapy effectively said, 'It's not just background music, you are working with rhythm, melody, harmony.' Besides music, We have often forgotten to relish the stars and moonlight, the colours and fragrance of flowers, the lovely songs of the birds... they all bring solace and are part of the blessings, love and elixir from God.

**Conclusion.** I will remove the damage caused by spite and grief, or else I have surrendered my happiness into the hands of circumstances. Anger for example, is more harmful than the injury that first evoked it. Understanding, reconciliation and acceptance are vital. Why should sickness and sadness be my way of life? Instead I will make the most of each day and give maximum meaning and purpose to my existence. My world will no longer be a depressed, barren place. I will look at it afresh, one full of life, endless potential, charm and marvel. I will be happy, healthy and strong, I am all I have got. My sheer will to carry a fountain of gratitude, joy, love, and forgiveness within myself is enough to bring all the well-being I need. If my revival is not as dramatic as I wished, it is OK, I will do whatever comes next, and live one day at a time. The only direction for me is: **Forward, to full recovery.**

## Chapter 74 Learning from Failure.

We learn from life each day, constantly becoming wiser. We learn for example, that the best way to get rain is to schedule an outdoor party; and that the chance of a buttered piece of bread falling face-down increases with the price of the new carpet! V. S. Law commented, ‘Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterwards.’

It is easy to make mistakes and meet upsets. At worse times we fall into troughs in our career or make blunders that lead to failures. Nonetheless, many champions rise like phoenixes from ashes to reach greatness, they respond to thrashing in a positive and learning way, realising that we learn more from failures than from easy victories. Others cope by blaming fate and the world, they forget that setback is the chance to begin again more intelligently and capably, and that ultimately we are accountable for our lives.

Edison asserted, ‘I am not discouraged, because every wrong attempt discarded is another step forward.’ Malcolm Forbes reiterated, ‘Failure is success if we learn from it.’ Failure really teaches success. If we treat the past as a trial-and-error and learning process, then we can sharpen ourselves better to spearhead into the future. It is this process of surmounting setbacks, solving problems and learning from mistakes that gives growth, wisdom and meaning to our lives. Every bad experience bears the fruit of equivalent benefit, usually some blessing in disguise. Can you imagine a person who has never met hardship or defeat? He will be more a cabbage than a calibre! Our response to mistakes influences our well-being, both in the near and distant future. If we want circumstances in life to improve, we must improve.

Losing is winning if you learn from it. The first steps towards learning from failure are introspection (look inside yourself), and retrospection (looking back), which you must do regularly, for growth and progress. An effective way is to ask yourself the testing questions: How good have I been? How good am I now? If People were to treat me like I treat them, would I be successful and happy? Have I neglected many things in my human and business life? ‘Do to others what you would have them do to you.’ This golden biblical saying holds. You can further scrutinise the causes of your failures among these weaknesses:

1. Poor social skills, human relationship and street-smartness.
2. Complacency, bad habits, weak self-control and discipline.
3. Lack of caution, calculation; inadequate practice and preparation.
4. Mismatch with job, environment, personal talents, abilities, etc.
5. Scattered focus, poor perseverance and will-power.
6. Lacking in various other ingredients of success.

We should not just learn from our mistakes, we must have a habit of learning from them, and from the mistakes of others too!. Draw wisdom from your woes and fruits from failures. Understand the causes and implications and make a brand new start. Stanley Arnold noted, ‘Every problem contains the seeds of its own solution.’ It is not enough just to live, you must learn. Success is not a gift, it is something you must earn. We are here to learn love and to give, with a purpose to fulfil, a duty to perform. Many if not most, of the successful grew up from foils and frustrations. What really distinguishes the greater people from the lesser is the ability to rebound from defeat. When you stop making mistakes, you stop growing, Keep erring and schooling, learn all you can and you will surely find rewards and fulfilment in this ever-changing, ever-progressing world.

“What determines whether failure stops a person or not is how the failure is held.”  
- Werner Erhard.

“Some of the best lessons we ever learn, we learn from our mistakes and failures. The error of the past is the wisdom and success of the future.” - T. Edwards.

“There’s one thing more painful than learning from experience, and that is not learning from experience.” - Barbara Johnson.

“If you have made mistakes, even serious ones, there is always another chance for you. What we call failure is not falling down, but staying down.” - Mary Pickford.

## Chapter 75 The Importance of Physiology and Disposition.

I have more good news for you. You can change your feelings and gain relief and joy in a simple way, and here you will learn how. Research has shown that while our feeling affects our behaviour, behaviour also shapes feeling reversibly! In their tests psychologists found that after their subjects pretended to look scared, their bodies reacted with increased heartbeats and colder temperatures, as if they were really afraid. Different reactions also came with acted anger and sadness. Then there are religious mediums, who change internal conditions to empower themselves; they walk on fire, or cut and rejoin their tongues!

Acting happy makes us happy, and behaving in a certain way changes the way we feel. I learned that too well in all these years. There were times when I felt tired and unsociable, but as soon as I acted light-hearted and friendly, the cheer soon grew in me and took over! You can use your expression to change your emotions. Isn't that fun? Let me prove that to you: Now, you sit up or stand up straight, stick out your chest and your chin, look up confidently, take a deep breath. Say to yourself, 'Nothing whatsoever bothers me, I feel good.' Smile or even force a gentle smile, and gradually widen it, then start humming a tune. You will be surprised how assured and pleasant you feel!

As you see, you can change your physiology instantly by improving your breathing, poise and expression. You can change your condition by picking the right things to plan, focus and work on; so channel your thoughts to all the best things. Furthermore, perfect your skills by adapting your state to the needs of various demanding environments. Do develop this talent, and maintain harmony and cheer always, even when things get tough or go wrong. The key to excellent living is to let many good ideas, values, interests, undertakings and fascinations direct your life. Sadly, others fall into the lowly paths of extravagance, wastage, laziness, gluttony, alcoholism and drugs, where their state deteriorates, with sad consequences. Mind you, your stance is so important that it moulds your creativity, well-being, intelligence and performance. If your state is further supported by confidence, belief, conditioning, concentration, determination and action, it culminates in awesome power and achievement. To understand my point, just watch carefully the circus performers and Olympic champions, doing their diving,

swimming, weight-lifting and gymnastics feats!

Your energy is controlled by your thoughts and actions. Bad posture, countenance and negative emotion can undermine your well-being. When you say, 'I might lose this tennis match, he looks stronger than me,' your defeat is almost certain. If you slump, slouch, sulk and skulk around, you are unlikely to be happy and bad things may even happen to you! At times, you may blame your feelings on other people's actions, when in fact you are the culprit with your imagination, sensitivity and negative views. Stop being a gloom-monger and improve the way you feel. Whenever someone treats you badly, it is his poor mental and physiological state, not his person; forgive him. On your part, maintain your good outlook, and you would never think, say or do regrettable things, you would improve the situation instead.

You can also use your disposition to dispel or subdue fear and panic during a crisis. Some people become a nervous wreck or just collapse at a disaster or accident. You need not have to. Just appear cool, calm and collected, keep your behaviour smooth, steady and serene, and you will feel confident and exude composure. Your calmness is infectious too, and will help others in trying moments. Smile and cheer yourself up always. Dress and feel your best to improve your mood, assurance and performance. Even a clean car drives better than a dirty one. That is why sports champions, karate and kung-fu experts yell at the critical moment. This tightens their muscles, increases their strength and courage, and frightens their opponents too!

This is what we really need in life - the ability to change and improve the way we feel. What a wonderful tool to have! Now you can make yourself feel good, and if you can tickle yourself you can laugh whenever you please. You realise too that if you act and pretend long enough, you become what you are acting! The next chapter will further teach you how to behave and live better. Your disposition can master your environment; get into your most resourceful and empowering mode now, change your state and change your life!

## Chapter 76 Your Response to Daily Situations.

Our lives consist of minutes, hours, days and years. Our attitude, thoughts and responses to daily situations are crucial; over time they add up to make our total destiny! Positives are empowering, but negatives are the Achilles' heels; they weaken us and persuade us to throw in the towel. How can you attain greatness by thinking petty or pathetic thoughts? It is also more tiring to harbour negative feelings than positive ones. Things like grudge and resentment only allow others to hurt us longer. There is no reward in grumbling; solve your problems quickly instead of moaning about them. Let your positive outlook bring another good day.

Your advancement should keep you so busy that you have no time for complaints and criticism. Emerson noted, 'Life is too short to waste in critic peep or cynic bark, quarrel or reprimand...' A Chinese proverb says: 'It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.' Reactive people complain about the weather; proactive ones create and bring good weather with them! Their proactivity magnifies their scope and power of mastery. Can you recall my brother's drenching boat ride in Chapter 66?

Darwin wrote, 'The highest possible stage in moral culture is when we recognise that we ought to control our thoughts.' Shakespeare noted, 'Nothing is good or bad, but thinking makes it so.' Since we cannot control fully our external conditions, our internal assessment of these conditions makes huge differences! Deep in ourselves, our view of the world goes with the words and meaning we give to it. Our sight and comprehension colour our world, affect our response and shape our lives.

Words are very powerful. The way we think and talk about everything affects our feelings and behaviour. Mark Twain asserted: 'A powerful agent is the right word. Whenever we come upon one of those intensely right words... the resulting effect is physical as well as spiritual...' That is how forceful words are, they mould our vision and motivate us. The Bible stated: 'In the beginning was the word...' Since each little daily reaction is important, we must use an empowering vocabulary for all situations. It enlarges our well-being, softens our hardship and is our starting point in improving our lives and moulding our destiny. Now we hold a magical key and that influential first step towards sunshine, solution, self-mastery

and success. I suggest you make pages of positive phrases. Put them on the walls. Immerse yourself in them and use them constantly. Let them govern your response to the world. I've started a page for you, please carry on:

**Negatives**

I can't  
 I hate  
 All right  
 Good  
 Lost  
 Delight  
 I doubt if...  
 Interesting  
 Confusion  
 Intention  
 looking at  
 Rejected  
 Not easy  
 Problems  
 I may fail  
 Anxious  
 Hobby, skills  
 I have no choice  
 I feel nervous  
 I am overworked  
 Depressed  
 Loneliness, boredom  
 Failure, setback  
 I have many troubles  
 Hardship, obstacles  
 This is impossible  
 What did I do wrong?

**Positives**

I can  
 I prefer  
 superb  
 excellent  
 searching  
 ecstasy  
 I am sure of...  
 intriguing  
 perplexity  
 determination  
 engrossed in  
 misunderstood  
 can be done  
 opportunities, solutions  
 I will succeed  
 expecting, yearning  
 obsession, talents  
 I have a choice  
 I feel energised  
 I am just stretching  
 retreating to advance  
 peace and quiet, relaxation  
 learning process, rebound  
 I have many blessings  
 challenge, stepping-stones  
 This only takes time, I will try  
 How shall I do it right?

I will leave you with two beautiful quotes. Emerson urged us, 'Though we travel the world to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.' K. Gibran reminded us, 'The appearance of things changes according to the emotions, and thus we see magic and beauty in them, while the magic and beauty are really in ourselves.' What really matters is the right word, the right thought, and how we habitually respond to all our daily experiences!



## Chapter 77 Habits.

We have seen the importance of responses to daily situations, which should be consistently positive and supported by good habits. The Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote: 'We are what we repeatedly do.' Someone once said, 'Habits are at first cobwebs, then cobbles.' Your character are habits grown over time, so watch out, your habits are developing you into a finished product! John Dryden forewarned, 'We first make our habits, and then our habits make us.' Epictetus cautioned us, 'The second half of a man's life is made up of ... the habits he has acquired in the first half.' Let us see the importance of good habits:

First of all, wholesome habits bring healthy and happy living. Waking up early, eating nutritious foods, getting adequate exercise and sleep, and living healthily are all desirable habits. Sound psychological orientations and self-mastery are important too, they erase stress, fear, depression, self-pity and other habitual and deadly sins. The danger lies in the fact that we do most things without thinking while they take roots in us, things like smoking, drinking and lazing away. Mind you, around the world people are even hurt or killed each day because of bad habits like drunk-driving, smoking and overeating.

Secondly, habits are vital for etiquette and social success. Most bad manners are habitual, like talking loudly and incessantly, interrupting, bad expressions and postures, little consideration for others, and so on. Learn to cultivate more and more good habits; once they are started and their benefits are felt, they become progressively easier to keep. Your pattern of behaviour even determines your all-important self-image. Change one and you automatically change the other!

Next, we come to our success in life, which is the offspring of excellent habits. Right routines always bring time-saving, energy-saving and productivity. They add value to our time and resources, instead of squandering them. Your subconscious mind is directed by what you think and do each day; it should dwell persistently on visions of all the good things that you wish for. Make positive thinking your constant companion.

Discipline yourself for distinction by having a strong purpose, which leads to the formation of winning habits. R. L. Smith remarked, 'Discipline is the refining fire by which talent becomes ability.' People wonder why the rich get

richer and the poor get poorer. It is little surprise to me. People are after all the products of their habits; their successes gather momentum as they enjoy the rewards. The poor remain permanently listless and weak, finding it hard to push-start that heavy first turn of their 'wheel'. Stiff competition and the snowballing advance of the rich eventually make them even poorer! However, for success to be powerful and lasting, scattered accomplishments and surges of motivation must be strongly rooted, and be as regular and consistent as breathing. In short, success is a habit and so is failure!

Great success is attained by the special few. Hence, it is only achieved in a special way, through discipline, persistence and proper habits. You must pay the **price** to win the **prize**, constantly controlling yourself, training, working and advancing. Nietzsche wrote, 'You cannot achieve great success until you are faithful to yourself.' Thomas Huxley remarked: 'The most valuable trait... is the ability to make yourself do the things you have to do... when it ought to be done... whether you like it or not.' Many notable people have harped on the marvel of self-discipline. Lao Tsu wrote, 'He who controls others may be powerful, but he who masters himself is mightier still.' The great writer Daniel Defoe asserted, 'Real greatness consists of being master of yourself.' John Milton concurred, 'He reigns himself, and rules his passions, desires, and fears, is more than a king.'

It is not easy to change noxious old addictions. Once I heard a joke that said, 'My Mom grew very fat because of shame. It is a shame to throw this out, it is a shame to throw that out...' It takes discipline and skills to put a full stop to foul habits. The best approach is to change them into good ones, thus replacing them nicely. Do new things to displace these wrong practices. Focus positively on these good routines, rather than hankering for bad ones. If someone wants to stop smoking he should enjoy the peanuts and chewing-gum instead of thinking about the cigarette. If you want to have a better diet, think of the nice things you can eat and not those that are bad for you. Put a halt to boredom, frustration and anger; take massive positive action instead.

Experts found to their surprise that relapse of bad habits often occurred after people had gone past the most trying and tempting period. They discovered that vile tendencies resurfaced as soon as anger, boredom, loneliness, sadness or other negative emotions set in. Other techniques to overcome resumption of these evil habits are: 1. Plan ahead, with the readiness to fight back with evasive or

replacement action when the urge strikes. Examples are taking a walk, talking to someone or doing something else that's positive and beneficial. 2. Avoid tempting and high-risk situations, such as depressed or grievous moods, and places of bad habits, with smoking, overeating and so on. 3. Reward and condition yourself for not resuming your naughty ways. 4. Get the help and support of family and friends.

The most effective way to adopt virtuous habits is still the cultivation of discipline. Even discipline itself is habit-forming; as the little rewards and advantages leads to more and more! Don't forget too that discipline is a gesture of self-training and caring. To me, it gives an enormous sense of self-worth and self-love. I feel I am a valuable, respectable human being, not a worm. When you recognise and appreciate this point you will exercise control, restraint and self-denial. Be a person with a soft heart and hard head, learn to say no. Indecision and the inability to say no are big time-wasters. Beware of comfort and complacency too, they are counter-productive. When a person gets too comfortable, he stops growing and achieving. Will Roger said, 'Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.' Stop dozing and daydreaming, and give persistence to fruitful behaviour. Consistency and perseverance are the hallmarks of champions.

A proverb says: 'Nothing is difficult if you're used to it.' My lesson is: Watch your habits, and build good ones progressively. You can work towards a fulfilling life, every minute of the day. Our time on earth is too short and precious; don't waste this golden opportunity.

"Sow a thought and you reap an act; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny." - R. W. Emerson.

## Chapter 78 Reading People.

Years ago I enjoyed reading books on physiognomy. After a few thousand years of observation, some Orientals have come up with credible guidelines that can tell personality and fortune from faces, hands and bodies. Every face tells a story. The shapes of faces, their features, coloration, contour, flesh and muscles are forever interesting. I believe we can to a certain extent, assess the character, the past and future of a person. I see distinctive eyes on the intelligent, sharp noses among the high-calibre, large and fleshy noses on prosperous people, and blurry gaze and tiny, flat noses on less successful ones. Many eyes look warm and kind to me; a few, cold and cruel. In many cases, health, intelligence, discipline and abilities are obvious; anyone can pick out the mentally retarded, they are most recognisable. Let us not go into details about physiognomy, because it will take pages of drawings and worst of all, it is also an unkind judgement of our fellowmen.

Actions speak louder than words, and silent signals take up almost half of our communication process. What we say is important but the way we say it is just as important. We have variations in voices, expressions and movements and our feelings are revealed both consciously and unconsciously. Body language can give us a powerful understanding of other people, and even ourselves. If we can read these messages well, we can interact better with people and deal with issues before they become problems. Despite variations world-wide, it is a language that we instinctively recognise but take for granted. Such communications are so vital that without physical presence, you haven't a ghost of a chance of closing a sale, winning a favour or a raise in your salary.

The first thing is territorial space. Different people, diverse cultures and varying levels of intimacy handle space differently. We keep more distance from strangers than loved ones, and we react when our space is invaded. I would put intimate space at 1 feet, personal distance at 2 feet, social territory at 3 feet and public space at 4 feet. Body language differs in various communities so the meaning of behaviour can't be judged conclusively. Asian Indians for example, shake their heads to say yes while other Orientals say no. Malaysians and Thais touch each other more than the British and Nordic, who are also more reserved with hand and body gestures than say the Italians, Greeks or Blacks.

Next, let us separate behaviour into 3 types: 1. Inborn behaviour, like smiling and frowning. 2. Unconsciously-learned mannerism, like gestures and postures that identify us with certain generation, age-group and class. 3. Consciously-learned actions, such as shaking hands and head-nodding. These fill up much of our social and business life. Watch how the models walk, to bring out their physique and charm. Controlled movements also come under this category, and experienced politicians are trained to exude credibility, confidence and leadership. When a less-experienced person comes into the limelight, he shows reservation and uncertainty. He usually moves or places his hands awkwardly, or fiddle with his clothes and touch a part of his face.

Generally, folded arms and crossed legs show a certain amount of discomfort, barricade and lack of receptivity; while released arms and legs tend to mean the opposite. Legs with knees pointing towards a companion carry more goodwill and affection than those pointing away. Parallel legs and crossed legs provide no simple answers because some people habitually cross their left legs over their right legs. A lady who sits with legs slanted, parallel and slightly crossed may show an orderly mind, but she was probably brought up to behave that way! Then there is the common smile that conveys friendliness, delight, humour, harmony, no-contest, non-aggression, or even apology. A genuine smile is shown in the eyes, and their muscles crinkle and smile too. Even then, smiles and laughter are more complex than you realise.

The eyes are the windows of the soul, they reveal so much! Besides, whenever we see something attractive, the pupils of our eyes dilate. Then there are the side-long glances, to see and not be seen, from strategic and cunning persons. Watch out for disharmony and discrepancy between what you hear and what you see, often we can spot insincerity. People do not normally look at you in the eye when they tell a lie, unless they are master-liars! In some cultures, however, avoiding your gaze may not be a sign of dishonesty. The Norwegians certainly stare more than the Japanese. Generally, people move less, or move too much when they are lying, they hesitate or make tiny body shifts and show discomfort. Criminal detectives are quick to recognise similar displays of guilt. But again, do not judge signs summarily, occasionally people may be puzzled or surprised by what you say. Among some professionals like lawyers and politicians, who are good in hiding, bending or sugar-coating evidence, their long experience make

falsehoods more difficult to detect.

The work-place is equally interesting. Those in authority always display mastery, confidence, relaxation, flexibility and fluidity, while the juniors are more rigid and subdued. The superior initiates and controls conversation, and moves with greater dominance and privilege. The subordinates for example, knock on his door, wait, or stay away when he is busy! Stress and subservient behaviour are easy to spot, such as slouching, hand-clasping, scratching, touching various parts of the arms, body and face.

As we move from the office into the home, we meet children who are indeed expressive, but adulthood requires them to subdue less business-like conduct. Some still harbour childhood mannerism; they know for example that a tilted head with pleading eyes can soften a few hearts! Clever mothers are also quick to grasp signals of frustration, sickness or guilt from children. Notice how some children stand stiffly and taps their fingertips against each other whenever they are scolded! Conversely, children are also experts since infancy, in receiving non-verbal cues from parents. When the mother relaxes and smiles the baby does the same. I believe this global lingo goes as far as the subconscious level. That is why occasionally, your mate answers you a question you are about to ask!

Go on and read more about this interesting language, with more experience you can become an expert in mind-reading too. In conclusion, do cut out petty mannerism and move with more purpose, weight and composure. Dress appropriately, and dress equally or just a notch above those around you, so that they are not intimidated. It is best to appear and act simple, straightforward and honest. Be sincere and be yourself. F. Nietzsche, the German philosopher commented, 'You cannot achieve great success until you are faithful to yourself.' Messages come from deep within and if you communicate with frankness, integrity and goodwill, you have nothing to fear. If you have kindness, sincerity, confidence and good self-image, it shows!

## Chapter 79 Street-Smartness.

Now that you have learned from failure and life's bruises and blessings, you are turning into street-smart people, with flair and wisdom that have grown and matured from tough experience. You have come out of your cocoons and joined the veteran 'fighters' in the streets. Here, I will add my dozens of years of training to top up your intelligence and ingenuity:

First, identify all your assets and resources, including those of other people that can supplement yours; use them and go further and leverage them for maximum returns. Human resources are the most important capital. Invest in them, cultivate and empower them, and share credits and accomplishments with them. Show patience, understanding and graciousness at all times. Never slam a door, you might want to return!

Stay on the grapevine and keep everyone in your large network on tap. Extra contacts provide more opportunities and leverage. If you do not utilise the connections in business, you should not be in business! Besides, clients, associates and friends who enjoy your company can double your joy and achievements. Remember names, and get to know people better. Kindness and courtesy are powerful and persuasive and they enhance the pleasantness and security on your route to success.

Strive for win-win arrangements instead of greedy gains from others. Remember, everyone has his tough life to live and no one owes you a living. Bear in mind that every interaction or transaction is unique, so always proceed with an open, creative and adaptive mind, without any bias, cynicism or presumption. Modesty and humility go a long way in winning goodwill, as well as extra knowledge and information, which may be beneficial or strategic for you. Learn to ask the right questions. The more people open up and talk, the more they reveal their needs and weaknesses, so do less speaking but more listening, digesting and thinking. Another issue is trustworthiness and confidentiality, they are diamonds in human relationship. If you don't keep confidence and promises, and you betray people's trust, you are heading for the dogs or down the drain; so be a person of your word.

On the other hand, be a person of the world. Society is full of trickery and

deceit. Caution and discretion pay. It is easier to stay out of troubles and scandals than to wriggle out of them later. If you smell hocus-pocus or a red herring, investigate or at least ask: Where is it written? Can you put it in writing? Is there a guarantee or warranty in this deal? This is important when you are dealing with crafty businessmen, or even lawyers and bankers who may have the other party's interests at heart. Do not assume their so-called expertise and professionalism will protect you; they may write like an angel but pull wool over your eyes. Often, people can play on your uncertainty and fear; they can entice with a carrot to exploit your greed and needs.

Never overlook the importance and value of money. You can lose much money by carelessly dealing with certain type of employees, associates, sales people, suppliers, and even with certain customers! Be careful. A fool and his money are soon parted. (The fool is unlikely to have the money in the first place!) When a trusting man with money meets a crook with experience, the crook will end up with the money and the trusting man with the experience! Nonetheless, you have to take calculated risks, as Napoleon wrote, 'The art of being audacious and very careful at the same time is the art of success.'

Trust your hope, and ignore your fears. Build courage in commerce. The competitive world is likely to confront you like a battlefield. In better times it is still a game of chess, so be canny and cunning. Never take your competitors for granted. They may have better strategies and weapons. Get into their shoes and try to read them like a book, then you can better match or outmatch them.

Everything is good for something. All knowledge and information are useful and applicable at one time or another, combine and operate them in a powerful synergy. Keep abreast of the latest news, breakthroughs, technologies, inventions, novelties and market trends. Maintain coherent, harmonious and smooth-flowing thoughts, instead of haphazard, interruptive thinking. They enhance rapport, empathy, positive ideas and solutions, rather than competition and criticism. Furthermore, good direction, focus and balance will minimise distractions and aimlessness. Sharpen your saw regularly, physically, mentally and spiritually. Get organised, so you can think, plan and work efficiently. You can then set priorities, followed by good decisions and fruitful actions. Accept your circumstances and view your obstacles in the right perspective, then iron out the problems.

Avoid the ancient but timeless 7 deadly sins: 1. Anger. It drains and destroys



you. 2. Envy. Avoid it. Are you so useless that you can't match others and keep up with the Joneses? Is the contest really necessary? 3. Conceit. Be humble, 'Pride goes before a fall', as the proverb says. 4. Covetousness. This brings greed, discontent and unhappiness. 5. Gluttony. It is the road to waste, obesity, bad health, uncompetitiveness and probably, failure. 6. Laziness. The outcomes are obvious, or rather, unobvious and empty! 7. Lust. Many have given in to temptation and suffered the consequence. Self-discipline pays.

Stay realistic about your failures and successes, your strengths and weaknesses, and neither make-believe nor brag about them. If you show others how smart you are, you aren't anymore! Keep some trump-cards to yourself. Meanwhile, have clear convictions, values and perception of your identity and worth; these reinforce both your character and street-smartness.

Measure your value by how much you get done not how hard you work! You may be very busy, yet ineffective and fruitless. As far as possible, enjoy what you are doing, especially your job. Do more than you have to, and seize opportunities to help your subordinates, superiors and mentors. Sometimes they will turn out to be your greatest benefactors, bringing promotion and prosperity.

Direct your energies to what you desire. Persevere and follow through to your goals and dreams. Life is like a battle ground. If you fight with unwavering courage, power, intelligence and skills, life will lay down its arms sooner or later, and will bestow you fame and fortune. Accept the challenge, and demand excellence of yourself and others from the start, right through to the colourful and triumphant finale.

"The knowledge of the world is only to be acquired in the world, and not in a closet." - Lord Chesterfield.

"When a thing is not worth over-doing, leave it alone!" - H. S. Haskins.

## Chapter 80 Selling Skills.

Life is a continuous selling process and everyday we are offering our knowledge, skills and capabilities. Selling is a popular career, bringing freedom, flexible schedules, social contacts, challenges, personal growth and satisfaction. You are likely to involve in selling sometime, so let me impart to you here all that I know, condensed into 4 pages...

**You must first get organised**, before you meet your customers. Equip yourself with tools that promote successful habits and productivity. Their sophistication depends on the nature of your business, and could include a diary, organiser, computer and stationery. As soon as you are organised get into the right frame of mind, one burning with desire, along a route that spells: Aspirations - Actions - Achievements.

**Next, find your prospects** in newspapers, congratulatory ads, phone books, offices, clubs and places related to your products and services. You can get more from social contacts and referrals. Qualify prospects first, before wasting time on them. Proximity and lack of competition help, so prosper in your own 'acre of diamonds' and pick tiny or deserted ponds with big fish! Knock on old doors too, repeat business is great. Before meeting prospects, you normally have to do cold-calling on the phone or doorsteps. Time your calls cleverly for best results as people have different lifestyle and schedules. In making an appointment always give alternative dates and times, which are more difficult to turn down. If you choose to do mail-outs first, make your letters and brochures catchy and easy to understand. If possible, show something new each time. If you are knowledgeable and experienced, it may be better to start prospecting at the top. This is where large budgets and big decisions are made, and you can make bigger sales!

**Now we enter the Preparation phase.** Groom yourself to be an experts and authority in your field. Rehearse regularly; visualise favourable response from your clients and yourself, right to the successful finale. Such imagery not only activates your powerful subconscious, it makes you sure and competent as you go 'quietly quietly, to catch the monkey.' Anticipation of success is a self-fulfilling prophecy, while negative expectation automatically floors you; so beware, believe in yourself and your products. Don't let traditions and hearsay hinder you - they say you need

the right seasons, localities, establishments, time of the week or year to sell certain products!

**Next, we come to Approach and Presentation.** It pays to spend weeks mastering the art of relaxation, which is contagious and conducive to conversation, positive moods and buying. As you enter, give the best first impression. You could even earn a good image before you arrive, through the prospect's friends or relatives. Speak clearly and calmly. Use a natural, pleasant, fresh opening sentence. A good beginning is half the battle and the simplest approach is always the best. Go along the creation of curiosity and interest, satisfaction of wants and reduction of risks. Assess your prospect's character and lifestyle quickly to modify and strengthen your attack. Learn to probe in an imperceptible way and identify his needs, tastes and preference. Be well-prepared in every aspect of your business and don't be caught off guard. Remember, people are receptive to experts and consultants but resistant to salesmen. Your technique must vary with the type of products or services you sell. Anyway, maximise their attractiveness and exceed the customer's expectation!

At this moment, the client is your most important person in the world; focus on the him, not you. Empathy and love attract and soften people and the caring approach is best. Make the information interesting, with visual aids if possible. Emanate energy, enthusiasm and humour, they are infectious. Smiles and laughter not only smother difficulties, they improve everyone's mood too. They make the sale an occasion greatly enjoyed by all. Get excited about your products and make your obsession his obsession.

The worst sales people are the depressing ones; customers already have enough of their own troubles and they don't need yours. Be courteous and sympathetic. Do not exaggerate, boast or appear cleverer than your prospect, or you will be sorry! Other things to avoid at all costs are: Leaning on his desk or talking over him. Looking around with spying or roving eyes. Talking too much, and other bad manners. Never make empty promises either, be a person of integrity, and honesty is the best policy. Don't be afraid however, to stand out a little. The great entrepreneur Victor Kiam, when he was with Lever Brothers early in his career, brought a monkey to a very competitive sales presentation! Selling includes showmanship. Have some powerful marketing tools, it is good to outshine others!

The universal objection is that sales people are pushy, slick talkers, so be considerate. Study and sum up your client's personality quickly but prudently. Next, maintain good eye contact and use the miraculous pacing technique to harmonise with his posture, breathing, tempo of thoughts and speech. Pacing brings him to your side subconsciously. Ask cleverly-designed questions. Talk less, and listen more to what the prospect is asking you and imparting to you. What he wants may be more or deviated from what he tells you, so be very sharp and reflective. In this way you can identify the 'hot button' to satisfy his hunger and incite the purchase. The WIIFM - What's In It For Me concept is very effective, it fuels the desire to buy. Sell them what they need, and focus on after-sale and long-term service too.

Do not get involved in technicalities that your prospect cannot understand, simplify instead, and make an offer he can't refuse. Suggest for example, that he can try now and pay later (provided your company's policies allow this). Get rid of negativism, hassles, and unnecessary rules, like no refund, no personal cheques, etc. Be ready to back-paddle too, or retreat to advance. If you are over-pushy, it may be time to relieve your customer by saying, 'Let's look at better alternatives,' or 'Let's postpone this and see if there's something else we can do.' Counter objections graciously and gently; they may be wrong but will they buy if you offend or belittle them? Friendship is important for your long term business.

**Finally we come to the Close.** Ask for the order, and do it as soon as possible! Assume you will get it and do trial closes along the way, it works! There're of course many ways of closing: The 'summary close' where you summarise all the benefits as you get his signature. The 'minor close' where the client picks his favourite pattern or package. The 'evidence close' where you cite incidents of clients' satisfaction. The 'possessive close' where you consider the close pre-destined!

An important skill in selling is the ability to meet disappointment and dejection happily, this is priceless. Tell yourself that every 9 rejections go with 1 sale, so more rejections bring more sales! They are normal and plentiful, let them prod and motivate you instead. Use my powerful '**Next, next, and next**' formula in prospecting, presenting and clinching your sales, then rejections are trivial and become part of your numbers' game. Our dreams are nothing without efforts and perseverance, and the successful salesman does what the average person doesn't

like to do. Learn to control your moods; they affect performance. Instead of dwelling on past misfortune, live each day preciously and fully as your last. Clean up your lives. Good habits are imperative in a sales career. Go to bed early and rise early. Reduce idling and cafeteria time and spend more time calling; more calls mean more sales. Invest in yourself, in books and seminars, and join the Toastmasters' Club. Get your spending right, and save 10% of what you earn!

Analyse and use the best ways to advertise and promote products. Give something away. People love free samples and incentives work wonders. Offer telephone order-taking, fast deliveries, free installations, easy financing, guarantee, interest-free ownership, business reciprocity (you scratch my back, I scratch yours), even government loans and subsidies. Christmas and other festive kickers, and special events like the Commonwealth Games and America's Cup are excellent opportunities. You can also sponsor a prize-winning contest or community programme and host annual dinners for past and present clients. Don't forget cross-promotion, using an associate who is already successful in the market, it can bring interlocking benefits to all.

These days, products are so sophisticated that your human touch is invaluable. Knowledge and information are fast becoming outdated, stay ahead. With advance technology and new products popping up as fast as they become obsolete, marketing has accelerated. You need vision, not just reactive ways for future markets. Multiply your sales in novel, untried ways. Be different and creative. Increase your prospects, your size and frequency of sales. After-sale service is very important. Arthur Sheldon's motto for Rotary Club International was: 'He profits most who serves best.' Look constantly for opportunities to serve, and to multiply values for yourself and your customers. Be the sales champion who not only succeeds but teaches his customers to succeed!

## Chapter 81 The Art of Negotiation.

In a world of human co-existence, the ability to negotiate well is vital. Through negotiation, contracts are won, sales are concluded and even grievances, labour strikes and major conflicts are settled peacefully. At various times in your life, negotiating is a serious business. The main ingredients of negotiating skills are: Knowledge of the matter and of your counterpart, preparation, perception, strategy and actual tactics.

**Your knowledge and outlook.** You have little control over the many complex variables, especially the value and cost structures on which your counterpart bases his strategies and demands. To begin with, the right frame of mind, attitude and assumptions are important. This is not a contest or game to be played, but an agreement process in which both parties should benefit. This is a co-operative process, not a competitive one. The ideal outcome is where both parties' gains are more than their losses; each gets something he needs more than his opponent. For example, an employer gains more from his employee's service than his loss in wages, the employee profits more from his salary than his expense in time and energy. Other important considerations are: Where, when, how, what, and with whom to negotiate?

We should never negotiate on the phone or in letters, of course. Flesh and blood make a world of difference. Furthermore, a good and realistic grasp of the situation by both parties can prevent misunderstanding and time wastage. General all-round knowledge and an insight into the specific matter to be discussed are both indispensable, so are the command of various tools and tactics to be used. Your pool of information, quality of your products, services or job performance are your biggest assets.

**Preparation.** Do some self-evaluation first. What are your strengths and weaknesses? What are your values and needs with regard to the upcoming negotiation? Do detective work and scientific research if necessary, to find out as much as possible about the matter and your opponent beforehand. Who are the other interested parties who will be present or absent at the talk? Do your homework and empower yourself by fact-finding, digesting, careful reasoning and strategy. If possible, find out about your opponent's past performance in

bargaining. Then sharpen your insight, foresight and your ability to predict his behaviour. To be thoroughly prepared you have to probe the assumptions, beliefs, needs, strategies and styles of both sides of the game. People have various needs comprising: Finance, safety and security, self-esteem, self-actualisation, love, harmony and aesthetics. A variety of situations can exist, in which you negotiate for your needs, for your opponents needs, or both, or even let your opponent negotiate for yours! Likewise you could negotiate against your needs, against your opponent's, or even against both your needs and his. Anyway, a good preparation is essential, it is half the way to success.

**Perception.** Get as much information as possible, certainly not less than those information you give! Look for hidden wants and commitments. Each clue can provide some negotiating advantage. Learn to see needs by asking questions, by listening and studying body language, which reveals important cues and secrets. The more you understand your opponent's necessities, the better you can negotiate. In asking questions, know what to ask, when to ask and how to phrase them and put them across. Some words and gestures can show sensitivity or emphasis on certain areas, and even sincerity. You should be exhaustively watching, sensing, digesting, adapting, adjusting; with full alertness, responsiveness and excellent timing. Bear in mind too that respect for others' preferences, viewpoints and confidentiality are also important. Next, let's look at the various tactics:

**Positions of advantage.** An example is where you can concede less but take more. In many cases it is good to use an agent yet deal with the principal. Your agent has limited power to give yet you deal with the man who writes the cheque!

**Precedence and participation.** Where precedence is set by other trade unions or workers in the industry, your demands are on stronger grounds. When you are part of a certain group, or when you associate with certain people, places and products you can bargain better, as countries do when they belong to a trade zone or regional grouping. Conversely, disassociation with undesirables helps in the same way.

**Contrive and provide many options.** If most or all of these alternatives are to your advantage, you are likely to latch on to something beneficial and laugh your way to your bank. Hence you must always negotiate as creatively as possible. Shall I get a longer credit period instead of a price discount? Can I have more share options and longer holiday leave in lieu of salary increase? What about a cash

allowance in place of a company car? Shall I take a lump-sum payment rather than staggered ones with interest? You can refer to Chapter 30 again for tips on creative thinking. You can give concessions on the one hand and gain on the other. Use barter and interlocking deals too. Some options bring greater benefits for both, and conclude the deal better and sooner. A concluding remark here: If you can't make a sale, make a buy and take over!

**Retreat to advance or seeming withdrawal.** Examples are: You supply something below cost to put competitors out of business first, then you revive! You appear to have surrendered while in perfect control of the situation. Back-paddling also allows you to catch you opponent off guard; assuming that you are losing and leaving, he may give you a little concession. You enter conceding but emerge winning. You seem to have his interest in mind but you also open more ways for yours! You can further use the elements of stand-off, or surprise; you can even move in contrary to normal and popular patterns.

**The use of patience, time and silence.** Endurance is needed while waiting for the right time to make certain suggestions or demand. Procrastination however, should be avoided, unless you have a strategic reason. With care and cunning, deliberation, delays, deadlines and dumbness can sometimes be used fruitfully, depending on the arrival of right and timely situations.

**Diversion and re-focus.** Diversion provides breathing space, and while you divert attention and pressure elsewhere you can pursue your real goals. Re-focus provides a fresh outlook with better options.

**Use facts and figures.** Statistics give evidence for what you claim and serve as bargaining tools. Marketing and promotion people and others show numbers, random samplings to assert their points. We know too that politicians and propagandists can even plant the people who take samples and averages! An extension of these is the appearance that you possess more knowledge and information than you really have, and that puts you on a stronger footing. On other occasions you can be the strategist who releases information to test responses and gets feedback!

**Inching your way.** This works well where you are settling many issues, and where your many little gains are almost imperceptible to your opposition. They all add up in the end!

**Go the extra mile.** This means working hard and covering as many grounds



and opportunities as possible. Take advantage of the force of numbers. Ask for the moon. Aim higher.

**The extreme case of negotiating for maximum gains.** Here you may make higher demands than usual, bargaining for the highest returns, and giving little concessions, if any. Time factor may have to be ignored because stalemate and sitting it out are expected. You could show little sign of weakness or hunger for consensus, but to make some headway you would still need to appear congenial, seemingly pursuing mutual benefits. Conversely, If you are confronted with this type of negotiator, you will have to seriously consider whether it is worth going through the tough game. Balance your pros and cons, and leave the negotiation if it is better to do so.

The danger here is the tendency to get carried away by power trips, if you push too hard and too far, your next step could be the last straw that changes your counterpart's stance traumatically or completely! Besides, a one-sided settlement where one gains lavishly at the expense of the other seldom has lasting benefits. The loser will sooner or later look for ways to turn his hardship around. A settlement in favour of one side normally breeds trouble and has no permanence. It is better to go for:

**The better way of negotiating for win-win outcomes.** Persuasion is surely better than force. Often it is better for both parties to pursue a win-win finale, although your counterpart may occasionally get more from your concessions. Start the talk with an open, objective, unbiased mind. Be harmonious and reconcile opinions and needs. Turn the negotiation into a co-operative exercise for mutual benefits. Change divergent interests into areas of shared interests. Trust, creativity, goodwill and common gains should replace suspicion, conflict and greed. Find some idea or item to agree on first and expand from there. Try and limit any disagreement to varying points of view, and not to your counterpart as a person. Weigh the pros and cons. Take a long-term view, instead of quick reward.

In a win-win situation, you provide something acceptable, yet easier to achieve in terms of time, efforts and costs. This means you have to be creative in your offers and counter offers. The secret is to detect and understand the needs of your counterpart and to assure him that you can help him to meet them. The above are two extreme cases of negotiating, you can compromise the toughness with the softness, at a point in between to suit your situation.

**Negotiating for a raise.** Here, the things you do before the actual negotiation, like preparation and positioning, are as important as the negotiation itself. The whole process takes planning, strategy, manoeuvring, timing and tactics. Size up the overall situation, including competition, your contribution and indispensability in the company. Set job objectives and performance targets, and turn yourself into a little profit centre. Gather knowledge and a skill that nobody possesses, or even something that surges in value over time.

Reduce your flaws, and have ways to conceal the remnants of your weak points. Take for example a common employment situation where you are doing well, but you are taken for granted and destined for just a normal raise. Your solution would be to show in a subtle way the expanse of your knowledge and skills by organising a training for the more ignorant subordinates.

There are various creative proposals you could put forward; you could take a higher pay for less insurance and retirement benefits, etc. If you are in a situation where your contribution is just beginning to show, stress the motivational effect a pay-rise would have on your performance. One blunder many raise-seekers make are the self-defeating, half-hearted efforts in getting a decision, and sadly letting the boss off the hook! The causes of this fiasco are: Indecisiveness, fear of rejection, poor preparation for all kinds of resistance. Another good advice is: Always try and get your 'raise' at the entry point before you start work!

## Chapter 82 Emulate the Successful, Learn from Them.

When we were young we learned many things by imitation: The teacher mixing water-colour on the palette...Father on the piano...The pop musicians performing...The movie star dressing in certain ways...The tennis champion in a particular style. Copying has spurred children to learning and progress. It brings interests and hobbies, followed by knowledge and skills. Parents, teachers and role models influence us remarkably. My childhood was surrounded by books and music! Martina Hingis, now the world's youngest tennis champion, was trained by her mother Melanie, at the age of two! She was once a champion herself. R. W. Emerson said, 'Every man I meet is in some way my superior; and in that I can learn of him.' Confucius echoed almost the same words.

As we grow older, creativity and individuality assume greater importance, because our strengths, styles, skills and dexterity are different. We are also in different situations, bombarded by unique demand, problems and challenges. By then, straight duplication isn't enough and it won't work. I would advise you against imitating obsessively, and replicating others on a long-term basis. It is unlikely that you have the same substance and circumstances. What works for others may not work for you. We have seen musicians who mimicked Elvis or performed like the Beatles, but they did not go very far. People would rather have the originals or something new!

A better extension to straight copying is role playing, where we think and act like our successful models in a more matured way. Here, imagery, visualisation and our spiritual setting help in a powerful way, which is not surprising to me. I notice that immediately after we watched the sports champions, we tended to perform better. In general, we should follow the lives of those who are already succeeding if we want to be successful. Some of these people are already around us. It is just a matter of studying them, watching them, asking them questions, mixing with them, learning their beliefs, values, attitude, strategies and actions. When we feel and act like them, we tend to take on their passion and power.

An 'idol' helps in other ways too. In times of hardship and dilemmas, we could ask ourselves what he would do in the same situation. Don't forget, we learn from other people's achievements, as well as their mistakes! Napoleon Hill noted,

‘My experience has taught me that the next best thing to being truly great, is to emulate the great, in feeling and action, as closely as possible.’ In this way, we are always questing for greatness in people and things, and embracing their enchantment and excellence.

The first step in stimulating ourselves towards success is to meet and talk to other people. In life, it is whom we meet and whom we know that counts. If we can go further to find our mentors and ask them how they succeeded, we can use their ideas and methods, some of which may work well for us too. It is not just mentors, all the good people that we meet should inspire and incite us in some ways. Since everyone is different, each will influence us in a unique way, and eventually our lives will be enriched immensely. Believe me. Many who are admired by others started out admiring someone! The revered, the great and famous started with high ideals and goals. So harbour big aspirations now, then choose your hero and let him take you to towering heights.

“Who deserves to be called wise? He who finds something to learn from each person.” - Mishna.

“Surround yourself with people who are as good or better than you are.” - Oprah Winfrey.

“Men takes on the nature, the habits and the power of thought of those with whom they associate in a spirit of sympathy and harmony.” -Napoleon Hill.

“You will always meet someone who can tell you something you didn't know before. Accept it, digest it.” - Dr Maxwell Maltz.

“The actions that go into being happy - the expressions, the postures, the movements - can make you feel happy.” - J. Laird.

“Be with wise men and become wise.” - Proverbs 13:20.

## Chapter 83 Dating and Romance.

Youth is an exciting season in everyone's life. It is a time for growth, friendship, dating and romance. Dating however, should serve the right purpose of finding the perfect mate to share one's life. The first question that arises is: **Are you old enough to date?**

You must first develop emotional maturity, the prerequisite for romance and marriage. Ideally, you should begin dating after you are 21. Before this, it is best to have a large circle of acquaintance where you better your chance of meeting someone who matches you. Which would you rather do, choose a good apple from hundreds, or choose from 5 miserable ones left on the shelf? Don't jump into a relationship, until you have watched and assessed many dozens of prospective partners. You can do this among the hundreds that you meet and get acquainted with. Subsequently, you narrow your choices. Dating too soon confines your interest to one person, when you should be associating with a wide spectrum of people to develop your social skills, knowledge, career and emotional maturity. There is much enjoyment in meeting people, seeing places, doing social work and accomplishing projects.

This is therefore not a time to toy around with other people's affection. This is a period of prospecting not passion, investigation not intimacy. Too many youngsters get their values and priorities wrong. Their confusion could bring unnecessary distress sooner or later. A wise teenager would concentrate on his or her studies and qualifications, gain financial strength and emotional maturity before plunging into romance and marriage, a case of multiple winnings. Marriage is therefore, better after the age of 24.

**Make a wise choice.** Love at first sight may be all right but a second look is better; love with insight is better still. Infatuation abounds and happens fast. Crushes with good looks and smooth talks can be amazingly short-lived. Remember, whatever is soonest hot is soonest cold. Romantic excitement about each other is not enough to carry the couple through the years ahead. Eyes clouded by rosy emotions and fantasies and removed from reality and reason can bring great disenchantment later. Don't get carried away. True love develops slowly, with appreciation for a partner's total personality, spirituality and values. It gives

and cares unselfishly, and brings out the best in the couple. As soon as you are interested in a person, you can still move in groups and keep some distances so that you can see the real person and make better judgement before you are drowned in passion, and become blindly committed.

Everyone deserves to find the ideal partner, yet people rarely employ a strategy for baiting and netting the right one. Write down all the things you want in your mate in the areas of values, virtues... Written goals ensure good choices. Don't forget, you can supplement goal-setting with affirmation and visualisation to find your perfect mate. You can make things happen, believe me.

**There are dangers and pitfalls.** Let us look at life's harsh realities: Some teenagers started dating at 16 in high school. As a result they performed badly in their studies. Then their emotional immaturity couldn't sustain the romance and the pair broke off, resulting in double losses. Even if the relationship continued, they would have dated 8 years before they were financially sound for the wedding, they would be beset by weak academic qualifications, a mediocre job, and over-intimacy before a lustreless marriage.

Adolescence often brings unhealthy influence and temptation. Many teenage boys mix with the wrong group who - often through insecurity - have the compulsion to prove their masculinity and mettle. They are not looking to give affection or something, only to get it. They form the bad habits of promiscuity, which hamper their growth into sensible, strong and secure adults.

Promiscuity often brings disappointments, and worse, feelings of guilt, lowered self-respect and self-image. Many began with honourable values but learned to live by another, resulting in much emotional conflict. They have crossed the line of no-return and regret.

In contrast, chaste and romantic love was the order of the day some 30 to 50 years ago. Sadly, there is so little of that now. Lust has taken over with little moral values, even though we are physically still the same. A wrong set of principles and habits, adopted by 500 million people, is still a wrong set of doctrines! Young people now ought to revive, or re-create those traditionally cherished convictions through their mutual respect, good conduct and wise usage of time and leisure.

Romances are not without sad endings. Remember always, that to love is to be vulnerable. Surprises, disappointments or unforeseen circumstances may befall you. Joy and intimacy may end in detachment, loneliness and grief. In loving and

losing someone, remember the principle of happiness: Accept everything, what you can change and cannot change. Admit too that you cannot make someone love you, or love you forever.

The season of courtship is of great importance, it offers potential mates the opportunity to learn more about each other. This is an opportune time to assess each other's overall maturity and compatibility. Ideally, this period should not be too long, as it brings restlessness and physical temptation.

**Your values and judgement affect the success of your marriage.** Before marriage, meaningful communication, understanding, goal-setting, and mutual encouragement are perhaps more important than showering affection on each other. Date in groups, set limits and avoid those tempting circumstances.

Falling in love is only the onset of romance; it may not lead to lasting true love. It only gives us a taste of what it should be, permanently. Romantic love ought to be limited to dating, while passionate love should be reserved for marriage. Matrimony deserves its holiness.

Romantic love can obscure the significance of understanding, sharing and caring. Besides, married life brings a lot of harsh realities and disenchantment, like piled up dishes and laundry, sick and sobbing babies, and endless bills to be paid!

Human beings are the highest form of life on earth, and marriage is their most important union. The power to start life is too wonderful and sacred to be treated casually. How could we take this alliance so lightly? Those who do often end up with disharmony and even divorce. Many a marriage fails because the partners ignore its sanctity, and did not prepare for it with respect for its dignity and divinity. There is now this growing disregard; in America, for every 4 marriages, there is 1 separation or divorce, with sad consequences.

Extensive surveys in Europe and America found that couples who lived together before marriage were more likely to separate or divorce after that. Teenage promiscuity is also known to increase sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy and its resultant problems and poverty.

Passion and physical intimacy alone cannot forge a permanent bond, especially when meaningful communication, learning and progress are precluded. The less fortunate ended up in an unwanted marriage or unwed motherhood. Sow discipline and devotion, and you will reap a harvest of fidelity and felicity.

While showing restraint in the face of passion and provocation, think about

the great and precious future you are preparing for. In the years to come you will look back at your courtship with pride and satisfaction.

When you are old enough and emotionally matured, when you have qualified academically and professionally, when you have made numerous acquaintances and identified your ideal and compatible sweetheart-to-be, you may start dating. You have deserved this sweetest season of your life. Happy dating and sweet romancing!

“Love endures only when the lovers love many things together and not merely each other.” - Walter Lippmann.

“Man and woman are made to love each other. It's only by loving each other that they can achieve anything.” - Christina Stead, Australian writer.



## Chapter 84 Love and Marriage.

God created man and woman, brought them together in marriage, and gave them the wonderful power of procreation. Marriage is undoubtedly on a divine foundation, it is a part of life in the universe and a natural state for us. Globally, extensive research has indicated that married people lived happier and longer lives. A loving relationship increases security, self-esteem, health, fulfilment and well-being. George Sand said, 'There is only one happiness in life, to love and be loved.'

**Are you ready for marriage?** Ask yourself, are you matured enough and well prepared financially, emotionally and spiritually? Painstaking studies have shown that early marriages resulted in more break-ups, compared to later ones which enjoyed better emotional and financial stability. The importance of the engagement period should not be overlooked. It allows time to make plans, discuss problems and settle differences. Here, it is best to leave romance out and examine practically what your mate expects and desires in the oncoming marriage. At this time, couples should have discipline, and show deference for the holiness of matrimony. Some words of caution: Statistics have shown that couples who lived together before marriage were 40 to 80% more likely to separate or divorce later.

**Are you making the right choice?** Deciding whom to marry is the most important decision you will ever make in your life. If you pick your partner wisely, you save yourself much heartache later. Thomas Fuller said, 'Keep the eyes wide open before marriage; and half shut afterward.' The great Socrates noted: 'By all means marry; if you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.' Marry someone who has many similar interests, but have some dissimilar ones to supplement yours. It is nice to have a bond based on similarity, and attraction based on opposites.

I believe one should choose a life partner with one's head, not one's heart. Cool thinking and clear judgement must prevail to make a wise choice. A Spanish proverb advised, 'If you want to marry wisely, marry your equal.' Don't marry someone whose intellectual, financial and cultural background contrasts sharply with yours. If you do, you are likely to meet difficulties. Neither should you marry someone who has more problems than you. You don't need more of them! Don't

assume that your romantic excitement about each other is enough to breeze you through the years! Be careful, let me warn you, there are people who have suffered many years of married life, simply because they had not been cautious and thorough enough in selecting their partners. Carelessness invites misery.

**Commitment, worthiness and faithfulness.** Marriage is a total commitment between two people, for mutual advancement and benefit, and complete fulfilment of dreams and goals. For a start, you have to love yourself before you can love others. You need a clear conscience, to feel your self-worth, and to feel worthy of your mate's affection. When you feel good about yourself, you can live your life wholly and love your mate fully. Then both of you can go on to enrich each other with completeness and dignity. In successful relationships, husbands, wives and family members constantly build and boost each other's qualities. Unfaithfulness, on the other extreme, destroys the bond of love, and is a betrayal of trust and the marriage commitment. Many families have been ruined by infidelity.

**Unconditional love.** When you truly love someone unconditionally, you empower him or her with self esteem, support and security. A good wife is priceless. She gives her husband affection, care and strength; bears and raises his children and tends and beautifies the home. She works best when she is most needed. She can turn a sulky husband into a successful one. Harmony, understanding, religious values and a united purpose can surmount difficulties and lift the couple to great joy and achievement.

**Cultivate a green thumb for your relationship.** Make your marriage beam and bloom. Have fun times together to forget the daily chores and pressures. Many let their marriage wither without making the extra efforts to keep it alive. Look with love not just for love. Understand your partner's wants and wishes completely, through close attention and appropriate responses. Provide the emotional support for your mate and intensify your fondness for each other; go to the extent of pointing out the qualities you enjoy in your spouse. Show appreciation and affection continuously, feeling appreciated is a basic human need. Excellent relation with anyone needs 2 important things, consideration and respect, and these are central and crucial to a good marriage.

Total reverence and concern for each other, and complete acceptance of each other's uniqueness and ideals are the foundation for love to grow and the

merger to last. A loving relationship, full of growth, creativity and mutual admiration, enables a person to feel, express and reciprocate with more fulfilment and completeness.

Time together is a top priority. Give love the time it needs. Give each other room to breathe and grow too. Like the trees or the birds, you need the space to spread your branches or wings. After a hard day's work you need some time alone to rest and unwind. Have united values and goals, with sharing and teamwork. See the preciousness and potential in your mate, and the capacity for growth and success. Take advantage of the changing times and environment, to develop fresh interests and activities. You can adapt to change, then progress together.

Take delight in grooming and improving each other. In a good union, the partners offer undying love and total commitment, and grow together year after year. Retrospect, introspect and see ahead. Soul-searching should include the adequacy of support and level of advancement you have given each other. Make short and long term plans together, even new year resolutions. Such togetherness foster a strong sense of unity and permanence.

**Prepare for harsh realities and problems.** Don't be puzzled if marriage is not a bed of roses with no bills and no ills, as painted in the best-selling romance novels. Those authors' real lives were not beds of roses either. Be prepared for harsh realities. There are numerous responsibilities and household chores. The baby wants his milk in the wee hours before morning; children falling sick and crying through the night; cobwebs in the garage; leaks in the ceiling; trees to be trimmed and lawn to be mowed.

Difficulties in a relationship often arise from stubbornness and the inability to adapt to change. Many conflicts have been resolved simply by one or both of the couple's efforts to change, and to expunge the faults that were straining the marriage. Often it pays to take a fresh look in a different perspective. Accept divergent points of view, instead of insisting on your opinion and struggling to change your mate's mind. In a crisis, stage a solid, you-and-me-against-the-world unity. Tolerance and compromise allow love to grow. It will survive, and it will override all momentary misunderstanding and resentment. Joy and laughter will follow upsets and tears; the rainbow will return after the storm.

**We've seen the DOs, let's see all the DON'Ts.** Don't anticipate a marriage life of blossoms and breeze. Neither should you demand subservience,

and total consistency in your partner. Don't expect to change your partner completely. As far as possible accept your mate as he is or she is, and any attempt to change him or her should be gentle and tactful. Certain things are not changeable; accept them. Never interfere with your partner's unique ways of being happy. Avoid fault-finding, suspicion, selfishness and indifference, they kill love and the family's capacity for success. Some women nag, criticise and undermine their husbands' self-image. In disparaging their husbands they have defeated themselves. Instead they should enlarge their mates' ego, balm their bruises, lighten their load and excite their enthusiasm. Blame and criticism are venom to marriage. Many conveniently make scapegoats of their mates when things go wrong. You should instead do self-examination and assume full responsibility for your marriage; the more you do that the happier both of you become.

Never confuse reasoning with feeling. On most occasions, clear thinking and not emotion, should prevail. You ignore little irritants at your peril. Wise couples deal promptly with problems before they worsen. A mild grumble may hide annoyance and even anger, and these grievances escalate with time! Don't fight in your marriage, learn to fight for your marriage instead. Try to love, not to win. The win-win arrangement suggested for the business world should be brought home.

**Good rapport.** A couple should have more to talk about than any two persons on earth! Good rapport clears confusion, distrust and creates a sense of belonging and a powerful bond. Don't overrate your ability as a mind-reader. Avoid misunderstanding at all times by making yourself clear, and by understanding your partner. Communicate. Make your marriage partner your top priority in life, constantly improve your relationship and reinforce your intimacy.

**The beauty of friendship.** Many couples have forgotten they are not just bread-winners or home-makers, they can be the best of friends and companions, always there through the storms and rainbows. Ironically, many couples are generous, accommodating and courteous to friends and outsiders, but demanding, edgy and impatient with their own spouse! The happiest couple treat each other as best friends, and spend much time together in meaningful plans, work, home-building and delightful hobbies. They double joy and cut grief into halves. They see the best in their mates, and they view this excellence as a reflection of themselves, because the best attracts and deserves the best.

**Virtues.** The essence of love is selflessness. If you want to be assured of true, endless love, you must be a person worthy of such. Acceptance, openness, honesty, kindness and forgiveness are all important attributes. Acceptance means total approval for your mate. Openness lowers defences and allows more intimacy. Honesty leaves no room for doubts and suspicion. Kindness represents many virtues. Forgiveness permits grouches to pass before they become harmful. In a quarrel, the winner should be the first one to say: I'm sorry I hurt your feelings, please forgive me. All couples aggravate each other at times, and they should forgive instead of building resentment. Only then can they rekindle their flame and let love flourish again.

**A marriage is a delicately balancing seesaw.** It is full of give and take with neither side taking advantage of the relationship. This is important especially in matters of finance, where money should be 'ours', not mine or yours. A lack of equilibrium will sprout common problems like nagging, undesirable in-laws, sexual incompatibility, grudges and infidelity. None of the pair should struggle for power and dominance. Regardless of each one's speciality, strength and exact efforts, both should operate as equal contributors to the home.

**A lasting union.** Helen G. Douglas declared, 'When a marriage works, nothing on earth can take its place.' If both partners freely discuss and decide, give and receive, confide and co-operate, play and plan together, the chances for a permanent love affair are good. Nonetheless they must constantly put into their marriage, work towards harmony, congeniality and a lasting and loving alliance. Here, partners build each other's confidence, self-image, and fighting spirit against life's battles. The feeling of being ONE is superb; it is characterised by mutual glances across a crowded room, shared trials and trills, whims and worries, hind-sights and fore-sights.

Experts find that sexual intimacy and religious strengths are the best mix, resulting in couples playing and praying together. If you put God at the centre of your marriage, it will remain alive and well. After years together and the arrival of children it is normal for the initial ecstasy to subside, but this will be nicely substituted by a growing attachment, rooted in years of understanding, support and affection.

“To have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness, and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part.” - The Book of Common Prayer.

“What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.” - Matthew 19:6.

“Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it.” - Ephesians 5: 28, 29.

“A happy marriage is the world's best bargain.” - Dr. O. A. Battista.

“There is no surprise more magical than the surprise of being loved. It is God's finger on man's shoulder.” - Charles Morgan.

“Love cures people - both the ones who give it and the ones who receive it.” - Dr K. Menninger.

“A deaf husband and a blind wife are always a happy couple.” - Danish proverb.

## Chapter 85 A Home Full of Affection and Joy.

The process of growing up, starting a family and living life to its fullest is fun. We go through the 4 stages: Believing in Santa Claus; stop believing in him; being him ourselves; looking like him eventually! Childhood is marvellous, full of affection, innocence, optimism and discovery. The second stage is exciting, with the consolidation of knowledge, skills, career and marriage. Middle age culminates in maturity, progress, prosperity and the great family unit. The last phase graces us with accomplishment, fulfilment and true riches.

No matter which stage we are in, home is where the heart is. It is the core of our existence and our launching-pad towards success. It is our nerve-centre and powerhouse, yet a sanctuary for comfort and renewal. A house is made of walls and beams, a home, of love and dreams! Dr Joyce Brothers rejoiced with the words, 'When you look at life, the greatest happinesses are family happinesses.' The united and happy family is God's greatest gift to mankind. It tends to have all the important basics, like morals, love, the sharing of values and aspiration, time together, good communication, enthusiasm and humour. With these it is a strong and holy entity. Let me elaborate below:

**Powerful moral sense.** Morality is the basis for integrity, love, patience, forgiveness and happiness. Knowing what is right or wrong holds the family together in virtues, and keeps vices at bay. Without high moral values and spirituality, the family tends to go astray, then things lose their meaning, beauty and excellence.

**Love.** The greatest happiness in the world is to love and be loved. Make your spouse, parents, brothers and sisters feel adored. When you love someone, you give yourself and make sacrifices, and you want whatever is best for his or her growth and well-being. Empower your loved ones constantly with compliments, encouragement and inspiration; not forgetting pleasant surprises, unexpected gifts and flowers. Consistent help in their career, and comfort and reassurance in times of hardship are priceless. Be a solid pillar of support. Be sensitive and considerate too, give them time alone and help them with household chores. Husbands should continue to court their wives until they are old and grey, with attention, tenderness, dates, weekend outings and nice vacations.

T. de Chardin proclaimed: 'Only love can bring individual beings to their perfect completion as individual, because only love takes possession of them by what lies deepest within them.' Happiness is incomplete without love, and our devotion to our family should be unconditional and second to none. Sometimes it takes initiative and effort to love someone who doesn't seem to reciprocate fully. Here, you can gain greater strength from God's love, and remind yourself to give first, in order to receive. A quote from Corinthians 13 in the Bible says, 'Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trust, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.'

**Sharing values, passion, goals and achievement.** My wife shares a lot of views, interests and dreams with me. We are always making plans for holidays, for a new house, for the children. Over the years, she introduced me to the best songs I have ever heard in my life. She also took me to Hong Kong; to the idyllic resort in Vanuatu in the South Pacific; just the two of us, with the coconut trees, the corals and the deep blue sea. My family enjoy being together, sharing each other's hobbies, games and social activities. I am always interested in my children's assignments and class ranking. I often congratulate them and reward them with little prizes. When I am away, I phone home often and help them with their school projects.

**Time together.** This should be top priority for the whole household. The family that prays and plays together stays together. Working, dining, picnicking, relaxing, sight-seeing and attending social and religious functions together are most important and delightful. Before my children were born my wife and I had more leisure time and we combed the beaches and river mouths for sea-shells and shrimps and we also caught delicious mud crabs. Then the kids came along, and we had blissful nights picking grasshoppers off grass-stems with torch lights. Later the birds in our aviary and the aquarium fish would snatch them off our fingers.

These days we frequent every park and playground in town. We also play tennis and swim hilariously. We go on shopping sprees and frequent all the libraries, bookstores, music shops and pet shops for new books, songs, fish and birds. At home, my youngest daughter Val would skim through 30 songs in my song book with me. My second daughter Vinny is different, she charms me with her violin and her perfect singing of '*Somewhere Out There*'. My eldest daughter thrills me with her paintings and piano pieces. Whenever I work abroad, I miss all



of them and tears sometimes well in my eyes. Time together is so precious that even middle-aged people miss their parents badly after they are dead and gone. G. Jennings said, 'Love and time - those are the only two things in all the world and all of life that cannot be bought, but only spent.'

**Communication and exchange.** When I was a kid I often came to dinner with mixed feelings. I enjoyed the wit and humour and the knowledge imparted at the table, but not the occasional reprimand from my Dad. Now I realise the great significance of this daily reunion. It is perhaps the only time of the day when a family is all together, sharing, not just cooking and dish-washing, but ideas, news and plans! It is grand rapport and the family's finest hour.

Communication is the key to participation and understanding. To experience deep and sincere love, we must freely express our feelings. That is part of giving, receiving and lasting intimacy. In an open and trusting relationship, the rewards are greater than the risks; even casual conversation can impart important information. It is best to communicate clearly, and to convey opinions and feelings instead of mere words. Lack of quality and clarity however, may cloud issues, or cause misunderstanding. Generally, the greater the obscurity in communication, the poorer the relationship; but the worst of all is the habit of keeping quiet, which undermines a family's unity and harmony.

**Enthusiasm and a sense of humour.** Enthusiasm is one of the few magical gifts we can give to our family. It is infectious, it expels negativism and boredom and multiplies pleasure and achievement. Humour is the best medicine. My wife is witty and has a better sense of humour than me, but I make up for it by telling her jokes. Sometimes, we found ourselves in separate cars, and we raced each other to get home first, amidst a lot of cheers and giggles from the kids. When my children were small, on odd occasions we were enraptured by theatricals in our bedrooms. They forced me into my wife's clothes, then they danced in mine. We laughed so hard we were all over the floor. Fun and laughter can make heaven of an ordinary home. The ability to laugh at ourselves and various situations cures worries and weariness. How could we be stingy with merriment for our loved ones? Let's hang loose occasionally instead of taking things seriously. All work and no play makes a dull home, but zest and jest boosts family merriment.

**Efforts and sacrifice.** Marriage is an empty treasure chest, you must keep on putting something to continuously take things out. You only get what you have

invested. Love requires efforts, and we spread love by giving, helping and going the extra mile. It is how you create and mould it, it is not out there well-done for you. It has to be made and remade. Marriage demands sacrifice, where selfishness should be surrendered for mutual gain. The union needs perpetual compromise. It is one of companionship, respect, understanding, and the sharing of goals and dreams. A lack of common ideals and interest can weaken the bond. W. Scott observed, 'A good marriage is like an incredible retirement fund. You put everything you have into it during your productive life, and over the years it turns from silver to gold, to platinum.'

**Little things mean a lot.** The longer people live together, the more they take each other for granted. This is bad and shows a lack of concern and care. It deadens the fun and harmony in a relationship. You should instead do things like calling to inform your mate that you'll be late, or that you've arrived safely at an overseas destination. A loving word spoken at the right time and place can match the comfort of physical affection. The whole world becomes more beautiful each time you walk hand in hand. Love-notes and surprise gifts do wonders. Occasionally my wife and I leave notes on doors and mirrors that led to hidden presents. Recently, I was away and I had roses delivered to her on Valentine's Day, I received her lips imprinted on the incoming fax.

Pleasant surprises like presents and parties are very enchanting; so are novel and spontaneous gestures. Unplanned candle-light dinners and outings to amusement parks and zoos are fun. There are myriad ways of expressing affection. Hugh & Gayle Prather beamed with the words, 'Once the mind releases itself into love, there are suddenly a thousand obvious ways to show it.' You see, to love and be loved is the greatest joy of human existence.

**Respecting and appreciating each other.** Respect is central to a happy relationship and is the sign of maturity and wisdom in the family. It is real and deep and different from the type of admiration associated with romance. Without it, ugly things like contempt and taking-things-for-granted, etc, rear their heads, then self-esteem is lost and love is destroyed. The best mates are sensitive and considerate, always adapting to each other's moods and fancies. They always know the right time to air annoyance or affection! My wife always knew for example, that I needed time alone for my books and jungle walks; she would stay home and cook me a good meal. I knew she needed time to chat with her folks or play soft-

ball with her ex-schoolmates.

We should never belittle or criticise our loved ones, but instead treat them like our best friends, house guests and VIPs; isn't that wonderful. We should highly respect and accommodate their individuality, rights, preferences and idiosyncrasies.

Most things of value require input and effort. An excellent family needs nurturing and care. Let's not forget that psychological gifts are often more valuable and lasting than material gifts. Self-esteem is the most fundamental human need, so we should compliment one another for work well-done. We empower each other by showing appreciation, even for little things. All positives are then accentuated. In this way, we are giving each other the strength to face difficulties ahead, and the spirit to march on. Money can build a mansion, but it takes love to make it a home.

“Nobody has ever measured, even the poets, how much a heart can hold.” - Zelda Fitzgerald

“Harmony is pure love, for love is complete agreement.” - Lope de Vega.

“If we love each other, nothing matters, come what may. Life to us will bring new hope with every passing day... Alone I halt and falter, but together we go far. Love shall be our guide, our sunset lamp, our morning star.” - Patience Strong.

## Chapter 86 More on the Happy Family.

The other day I walked into an optical shop and overheard a mother cursing her 2 short-sighted little boys: ‘You are both forever bad luck and useless to me; see how much money you have cost me...’ I’ve never seen more sorrowful faces on children. I think she inflicted permanent damage, especially to their self-image. Their sense of worth and self-respect is priceless and carries with it faith, confidence, expectation, and even courage and strength. Please remember this incident. One day, you will have children of your own, take tender care of them instead.

**Teach your children well.** There is no substitute for good parents, fine parents usually have fine children. Their devotion in time and attention can nurture positive thinking and self-esteem, making them feel loved, secure, positive and enthusiastic. Parents can teach virtue and spread love by example. If you are patient, considerate, responsible and loving, your loved ones will reciprocate and develop the same qualities. The most remarkable thing of all is that parents’ influence triggers the children’s talents and abilities, and moulds their personality and character. It is amazing how numerous unsung parental heroes around the world have ignited the impetus, genius and calibre of their children. I have given examples in other chapters.

Beethoven suggested, ‘Recommend to your children virtue; that alone will make them happy, not gold.’ If parents run their homes without the right morals and values, it is hard for the schools to teach courtesy, tolerance, honesty, and so on. It is a crime to shrink from these responsibilities and to leave them to teachers. Encouraging or condoning negative attitude is equally grave. If a child is not getting love and attention at home, he will go elsewhere, sometimes to the wrong places, to find it. Many of the troubles in society would be non-existent if we could have fun at home.

Parents should view kids’ problems as opportunities to jointly learn, grow and succeed. Those who are too busy or impatient to spend time with kids are losing the great opportunity of grooming them for the life ahead. Soon the years would have flown away and they would have no way of making up for the time they lost.

**The sacredness of the family.** The family is the oldest social entity in the world! It is the birthplace of morals, values, character-building and civilisation. Pope Pius XI pointed out, 'The family is more sacred than the state.' It should indeed be the cradle of learning, progress, free expression and creativity; the treasure-house of charm, success, songs and laughter. Home should be a balmy, sweet, sparkling, invigorating oasis, the most sublime place on earth. The great entrepreneur Lee Iacocca admitted, 'I've had a wonderful and successful career. But next to my family, it really hasn't mattered at all.'

**See the goodness in your loved ones.** Never take them for granted; empower and develop them. Discover their hidden assets and enhance these strong points. The keys to motivation and growth are gentle persuasion, warm encouragement and generous praise. Dwell on positive and important things. If your spouse or brother or sister annoys you, focus on his or her qualities, on the countless times he or she has pleased you, and done things for you.

**Shared responsibilities.** When household chores are shared, many hands make light work and everyone's burden is lightened. Besides, children are taught a sense of duty, function and usefulness. Many parents tend to cushion the lives of children, weakening them in the process. They should instead give them a share in the grind, allow them to develop competence and responsibility, and even let them participate in family decisions. Charles Kettering wrote fittingly: 'Men who came up the hard way usually try to make things as easy as possible for their children, thus denying them the discipline of struggle and self-establishment that worked so well in their own case.'

**Commitment to each other's welfare.** Some couples put top priority on children, forgetting that they would also suffer if their parents' marriage wasn't harmonious and strong. There should be an equilibrium that brings the best to everyone. A balanced commitment in time, attention, efforts and spirituality is best.

**Openness with discipline.** Be open about your feelings and convey them, yet disciplined enough to subdue excessive emotions. Sweeping feelings and differences under the carpet may undermine trust and understanding. If you need more comfort and affection, say it. In the light of this, parents should spend half an hour at night on heart-to-heart talks with their children to find out if they are thriving or troubled. What a good way and excellent time to empower and advance

them.

**Authority with full understanding, for the children.** Discipline is important. Some parents give in, and end up giving up! Good parents listen, digest, understand and decide on what are best for the children. They reason and explain rules clearly and convincingly. They must also work as a team; if they are at loggerheads, the children become disorientated or they quickly take advantage to divide and conquer! Parents could also get carried away with control and discipline, neglecting enthusiasm, common aspirations and direction.

**Share money matters realistically.** Many people do not realise that great sensitivity and stress come from money; even if they do they tend to avoid the issue. Are you spending selfishly, irresponsibly, and spending more than your spouse? Instead of brewing power-struggle and distrust, discuss expenditure realistically. If purchasing something means very much to your spouse, give in, and ask to have your turn to buy your thing next time. Besides, a husband should give his wife extra money above household expenses to spend as she likes. After all, her home-making commands real salary value.

**Coping together.** Once I lost much of our saving in a business deal, my wife gave me a hug and said, 'It's okay, it's only money, not you or me.' There is always forgiveness. A strong family makes a concerted effort against life's many challenges, which are only normal. Children should always share their doubts and difficulties with their parents, who can help them tremendously.

**An environment for beauty, harmony and progress.** My wife and I love colours, flowers and home decorations. Before our wedding we spent weeks choosing beautiful, soothing colours and painting them. Coupled to these were carpets, curtains, pictures, hi-fis, piano, guitar, aquariums, aviaries, flowers, books, and so on. The home should be a centre of intellect, inspiration, wisdom, music, arts, science, entertainment, opportunities, learning and training. Here everyday is a holiday marked with progress. Former U.S. president T. Jefferson recalled, 'The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family.'

**Change and growth.** Embrace change, the world is transforming. All members of the family must help each other to move in the right direction, to improve and succeed. Change for the better, give up vices and bad habits, for yourself and for those you love.

We have the potential for many qualities and virtues, and they should begin at home, the best place to launch our beautiful lives. If we cannot grow love and accord in the home, how can we find or spread it beyond our walls? Peace and joy in the home are priceless commodities and they build some kind of paradise to earth. Sir J. Bowring jingled, 'A happy family is but an earlier heaven.'

In ending this chapter, let's remind ourselves that there are enduring values to be imparted to our loved ones: Enthusiasm, optimism, love, beliefs, integrity and courage. The good father and mother are the children's greatest motivation, mentors and benefactors. They tune into the same wavelengths, show concern, get involved, cheer children's success and make magic moments and memories!

"The factory that produces the most important product is the home." - Carol Williams.

"Take time to grow. Take time to be healthy. Take time to play. Take time to be quiet. Take time for those you love." - Zig Ziglar.

"Family life is too intimate to be preserved by the spirit. It can only be sustained by the a spirit of love which goes beyond justice." - Reinhold Niebuhr.

## Chapter 87 Overcoming a Personal Crisis.

A failure in relationship, divorce, the loss of a job, financial crisis, sudden misfortune, death of a loved one and so on, are big huddles on life's journey, demanding great strength in our spirit. We must be prepared for these.

Deterioration in human relations is often caused by: Poor relationship skills and low consideration for other people, taking others for granted, ignoring and belittling them, a lack of love, kindness and virtues. Disputes over spending, in-laws and even over child-bearing also cause rifts among marriage partners. Then there are those who mature physically but not emotionally, they show poor judgement, irresponsibility and little interest in their mates. Complacency is harmful, you become too sluggish in doing more for yourself and others. Stubbornness is bad too, especially the inability to change one's ways. Selfishness is one of the 'last straws'. Others lack the self discipline to curb their bad habits and urges, and fall into drinking, gambling, and infidelity, which eventually destroy a marriage.

Experts identify 4 frightful stages that lead to matrimonial failure: Criticism, complaints, defensiveness and withdrawal. The early criticism stage usually goes unnoticed, until irritation builds up. Later a triggering event (such as the arrival of new baby or in-laws, a residential or career move) may cause a conflict. Couples should take care to nib problems in the bud. Be alert to changes in job, housing and circumstances, to tell-tale signs of stress, grievances and growing imbalance. As the discord worsens, laziness, irresponsibility, drinking, withdrawal and adultery follow. By the time the couple seek counselling it may be too late, the hurt and hatred may be too deep to heal; a separation becomes a reality. Divorce is a serious issue in the world today. In America each year, for every marriage started, another is dissolved, causing disruptions to families, children and society.

The burning question is: Is divorce always the best solution? It is seldom the best solution. I believe we can never be completely detached from someone we have once loved. Most divorcing people felt a last minute reluctance! Many who have looked back admitted that their marriages could have been saved if they had really tried. A good advice to those contemplating divorce is: Consider improving yourself, instead of replacing your partner; you may go on changing partners



repeatedly. Divorce is not a sure gateway to happiness, the parameters in the world are still the same. The governing factor is yourself. You get what you put in! Next, let's examine our prevention and cure of a relationship disaster.

Fortunately, world-wide experience shows that failures can be avoided, reversed, and obstacles can be overcome with ensuing gratification. People who embark on marriage owe it to themselves to build a happy love-nest, they must have the will to make it work. Much can be done through selflessness, sincerity, respect, rapport and co-operation, combined with the willingness to solve differences amicably, with compromise and mutual benefits. Here are more tips for you:

1. Build special relationship skills, and be watchful for little annoyances, which over time can reach dangerous proportions. If couples would analyse each other's moods and know when to show affection or air grievance, there would be less conflicts.

2. Don't nag, help your mate instead. Make suggestions and give persuasion rather than criticism. No one likes to be criticised, you can always find fault if you want to, no one is perfect. Acknowledge human and worldly imperfections. Minimise differences instead of making an issue of them. Recognise bad habits and destructive patterns, control them before they harm your relationship. The company that you keep is important. Avoid the drinking and flirting group, and have friends with healthy values and religious leaning.

3. Unconditional love is important, probably in theory, but in practice, a happy marriage is achieved through the partners' abilities to work out their differences, to surrender selfishness for mutual gains. Share household chores, responsibilities and money matters intimately. Discuss them freely, with give and take. A good solution is to take turn in giving in. She buys her new car now and he gets his indoor swimming pool later! Some couples have so little goodwill that they live a cat-and-dog life, endlessly squabbling. Isn't life too short for that?

4. Your spouse should be your best friend, the apple of your eyes, and given the deserved courtesy and admiration. If you are a partner worthy of love and respect, you can even change your spouse with influence and gentle persuasion! See change as a gesture of helping each other towards new interests, discoveries, growth and well-being.

5. In times of friction and discord, your mate simply needs understanding

and sympathy. The ability to listen unconditionally, to empathise, compromise and reconcile shows kindness, courage and strength of character. This capacity has saved many relationships.

6. Can you admit a fault and apologise when necessary? This is a virtue, showing humility, confidence and security.

7. Acceptance, patience and forgiveness can erase ill-feelings in the home, however, the outside world is a different kettle of fish, requiring prudence. There is a difference between giving love and taking abuse.

8. Success in marriage is not just a matter of marrying the right person, it is also a matter of being the right person yourself! Human relation banks on what we are, not just what we say or do. Now let's see how we can prevent and handle personal crises.

In life, many bad things could have been avoided if people had been more careful! Prevention is best along the following lines: Realism and wisdom in dealing with important matters; upholding safety and security; discipline and caution in all type of choices, decisions and risk-taking; good financial control and budgeting; careful documentation of business transactions in black and white to avoid disputes and lawsuits; contingency plans.

A crisis brings many responses, which you must learn to manage. Immediate ones include: Shock, fear, anger and anxiety. Subsequent responses comprise self-doubt, guilt, helplessness, sadness, mood swings and depression. These mental states bring stress, bad psychological and physical health. Sights of companionship and joy elsewhere may intensify the anguish. The healing process must entail actions to eject or replace the pain. They are as follows:

1. Reach out and talk to friends. Find solace and cheer in their company. Work and play. Hobbies and sports are good cures, so are entertainment, social gatherings, outdoors, nature and music.

2. Leave the past. Look forward to the future with enthusiasm and expectation. Adapt to the needs of the situation. Take a fresh look and a new path. Focus on positives and spirituality. Invest your time and efforts in the most meaningful undertaking.

3. Use visualisation and fantasies. Prisoners of war, and others who suffered great personal tragedies have survived, partly by nurturing a vision of a smarter, fruitful and fulfilling future.

4. Calm and relax yourself, rejuvenate your body, clear your mind, take deep breaths, gather strength and smile to yourself. Fill yourself with hope and aspiration, and move on with all your resources to something pleasant and productive. Affirm yourself with positive and empowering statements. Take invigorating and constructive actions. Keep active and busy, reach out and mingle with others

5. Think more rationally and less emotionally. Put the facts together and analyse them creatively, with intuition, insight and ingenuity. Place matters under ranking of priorities. Have faith in your ability, and believe that there is always a solution to any problem.

6. See beyond the earthly life, especially after the death of a loved one. Do not cling to deceased relatives and their memories, instead, set them free as they go heavenward to their paradise of beauty and happiness. Accept death as a natural process. Pray and seek God's comfort and guidance. Healing is found in faith, fortitude, prayer, religious activities, acceptance of life's ups and downs and its afterlife. Stay close to your religious community and prayer group. Studies have shown a strong correlation between faith and coping capacity. This is indisputable, as we belong to our family, our society and to our Creator. From them we receive support, solace and inspiration and through them we see meaning in life.

Avoid the following at all costs: Imagining the worst, focusing on what is wrong, dwelling on negative feelings, coddling your grief, blaming others, losing confidence and giving up. You may think all your feelings and sufferings are caused by others. The truth is, all your thoughts and emotions are under your direct and immediate control! Then you may ask: Why do bad things happen to me? Is God punishing me? Believe me, bad things happen to everyone, often for a divine purpose. All are fighting life's battles. No pain, no pleasure; no gloom, no gladness. Sometimes, we tend to think that most people are bad and should be probed and punished, and that they can only be subdued by force and retaliation. We should instead recognise that we all have weaknesses. If others do wrong, getting upset will not change things, taking positive actions will! Forgiveness, understanding, negotiation, compromise are the ways to go.

Next, you may assume your difficulties are beyond your control, and that it is better to put things off or escape. Wrong! Tackle your problem right in the face. Procrastination only extends your suffering. Sometimes you may think that you

need the support of others to survive. In fact you are stronger than you realise, and you are the first and best person to help yourself. Another unhealthy belief is: I must make no mistakes and attain perfection. Perfection is not attained overnight. Growth is the key and the only way to approach perfection.

Many of us learn and benefit from our wrenching experiences. Notwithstanding, the sadness accentuates the contrasting happiness that follows, how nice. We emerge afresh, and stronger to face life's challenges. As one saying goes: 'That which does not kill me makes me stronger.' After we have weathered life's worst storms, the rest becomes child's play. Now we can handle all of life's bruises and blessings, we can handle anything.

"Every crisis provides a chance to find your big self." - Dr M. Maltz.

"Couples sooner or later fall out of love, it is when the mating instinct has run its course that the setting for genuine love begins." - M. Scott Peck.

"The building of marriage is like the building of a house. I could see how simply many of my building problems could have been solved." - Nina W. Putnam.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self seeking. It is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs." - Corinthians 13.

## Chapter 88 The Foundation for Happiness.

We know by now that happiness starts from within, this is good news because we can now exercise greater control over our well-being. We know too that in life what matters is not the absence of problems but our ability to deal with them. In your pursuit of happiness, your internal preparation will do well along the following lines:

**1. Health.** Health is wealth, and this cannot be over-emphasised. William W. Curtis observed, 'Happiness lies, first of all, in health.' You need physical soundness, but psychological and spiritual good health are vital because the key to happiness is in you, and almost every feeling is a result of your views and your thoughts.

**2. Self acceptance.** Accept yourself as you are now, but recognise your potential for growth and greater fulfilment. You must be satisfied with who you are, otherwise you will never be content with what you have. It is essential that you are pleased with yourself, that you see your beauty and strength, and cultivate a high self-esteem. The best self-image is one that is positive, self-assuring, yet realistic. This is not always easy, as some disenchantment buried in the subconscious may still affect you in hidden ways. A complete house-cleaning is mandatory. The past is gone forever, let sleeping dogs lie. What matters is the present and the future. The persons you are now is the only reality, ready for achievement. When you are committed to your inner self, you will emanate confidence, purpose and character, which are very impressive.

Self-accepting people are happy, living with 'someone' they like 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They have strong grips of reality. They recognise there are things that they can and cannot have, things that they can and cannot change. They know that bad things can happen to good people for a divine purpose. A purpose they may discover later or may never fully understand in this life. Self-accepting people have a high level of self-trust, self-expression and self-respect. They remain themselves, they do not bow to commercialism and resort to self-promotion and publicity, neither do they struggle to keep up with the Joneses. They are secure, knowing that nobody is perfect; they can laugh at themselves and make a brand new start. On the other hand they can be assertive when necessary, pointing out

mistakes and voicing their opinion, with good reason and logic.

Experts found that self-accepting, handicapped people are equally happy if not happier, than normal ones. They accept their limitations, make the most of what they have, enjoy a simpler lifestyle, and achieve greater focus and ‘flow’ in their areas of work and play. The blind, deaf and physically disabled usually acquire specialised skills in their chosen fields where they shine and excel. The trick is to find some good in the bad, and some advantage in a handicap. At other times you can even retreat to advance!

**3. World-acceptance.** Happiness is natural and a birthright, you accept yourself, your place in the world, and your interactions with it. Bertrand Russell wrote in *The Conquest Of Happiness*: ‘Let your interests be as wide as possible and let your reactions to the things and persons that interest you be as far as possible friendly rather than hostile.’ Your best motto should be: While we work for the things we desire, let’s enjoy whatever we have. Epictetus observed, ‘He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.’

**4. Optimism, gratitude and contentment.** Lincoln noted, ‘People are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.’ Research has shown that optimistic people are less prone to accidents and illness and they recover faster from setbacks and sickness. So happiness depends mainly on our attitude, temperament and disposition. These traits alter and colour our environment. Solzhenitsyn, the famous Russian writer stated, ‘Happiness doesn’t depend on the actual number of blessings... only our attitude towards them.’ It pays therefore to always count your blessings and not your troubles. Henry Van Dyke suggested, ‘Be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars.’

You are fortunate compared to the billions that teem this earth. Isn’t it sad that people kill hours and days of joy by forgetting their gratitude and allowing dissatisfaction and resentment to linger? A little discontent is enough, it gives you the motivation. Bernard Russell wrote, ‘To be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness.’ Imagine yourself without the things you have, you’ll appreciate them more. Doug Larson noted, ‘The world is full of people looking for spectacular happiness while they snub contentment.’ Epictetus enlightened us, saying, ‘Fortify yourself with contentment, for this is an

impregnable fortress.’

**5. Accept full responsibility for your life.** Freedom, a sense of mastery and usefulness are important prerequisites. Hold yourself answerable for your life instead of blaming the world. You have the accountability to create a better person in you, to find peace and delight, to grow and attain success. Happy people rely fully on their personal power to control or influence their fate. If we analyse our lives, we find that whatever happens to us is directly or indirectly, our own making. For instance, one or more of the following often lead to losses and suffering: Carelessness, complacency and stagnancy; lack of caution and wisdom in making choices and decisions (such as the choice of friends, spouses, business associates and risky undertakings); absence of back-ups and contingency measures, and so on. Steer clear of pitfalls and take full responsibility, and life will become an enjoyable game, an exciting journey.

**6. Seeing and finding good.** If you never miss any of the good things around you and always get enraptured by them, and even go further to see beautiful things in ordinary things, you are miles ahead of others. Attitudes are more important than facts, they carve and colour your reality. If you constantly look for the best in everything, you will find excellence. Did you stop to admire and smell a flower? Do it now, the seasons come and go. The happiest people enjoy every little treat they get or give to themselves, an ice cream, a glass of wine, a favourite song or a walk in the woods. They find pleasure in simple, everyday things. They relish each simple moment, especially those minutes they spend with friends and loved ones. J. Oppenheim concluded: ‘The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance; the wiseman grows it under his feet.’

**7. Have great hope, dreams and purposes in your life.** In my younger days, special hobbies and pursuits always brought me pleasure: Rearing birds and insects, exploring the jungles for exquisite orchids and plants, fishing, catching prawns and mud-crabs. As we grow we leave those childlike pastimes and aspire to greater things, which bring anticipation and fulfilment. Life would be so barren and boring without aspirations. Putting dreams and ideas to work is the way to success. Rubem Alves declared, ‘Hope is hearing the melody of the future. Faith is to dance to it.’ Happy people are hopeful people. You must wake up each day eager to live. Be glad with what you have and pursue what you crave for. Success is getting what you desire, and happiness is loving what you get!

**8. An outgoing disposition and a life full of love.** Joseph Addison declared: ‘The grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, someone to love, and something to hope for.’ In the social sphere, extrovert people are usually happier than the introvert ones. This is confirmed by experts after exhaustive research. The best way to have good friends is to be one; the best way to beget love is to love. Og Mandino told us to ‘Treasure the love you receive above all. It will survive long after your gold and good health have vanished.’

The Koran and the Bible teach us to ‘Love others as we love ourselves.’ Happy people have an endless capacity for clemency and generosity. Buddy Hackett advised, ‘Don’t carry a grudge. While you are carrying the grudge the other guy’s out dancing.’ Love breeds kindness and integrity, untainted by selfish competition, and materialistic manipulations. When you surrender to the cold and calculating world, you stifle your capacity for compassion; how can you ever find affection and fulfilment?

It’s not just people, you should be in love with your job too. Be totally engrossed in your work and play, thereby attaining a state of ‘flow’, as hailed by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in his great book ‘*Flow*’. You can achieve this by living more meaningfully and purposefully, and doing the things that you do best and find most captivating. Find a meaning in your work, well above the reward of the monthly pay-cheque. When work is a toy, life brings joy, when work is drudgery, career is slavery. Franklin Roosevelt, 32nd US President observed, ‘Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort.’ Studies confirm that when work is highly creative, challenging, mindful, meaningful and absorbing, the worker achieves a high level of satisfaction and excellence. To enjoy ‘flow’, set targets, give total concentration, and enjoy the immediate here and now experience. Do what you love to do; live as a creator, controller, developer, initiator of your life. Climb out of the rut. Change from a victim to a victor, a slave to a sovereign!

**9. Growth not perfection.** Paradoxically, the people who get the most out of life are those who don’t expect plenty or perfection. They have an equilibrium built on flexibility, not persistence. They have free and creative thoughts instead of stubborn, pragmatic thinking. Life consists of living and working towards our goals, which is 90% of our time, and the retirement, comprising the last 10%. Experts maintain that happiness is a manner of progressing, not the destination.



That is why the journey and growth are more important than arrival and perfection. The whole process is the source of accomplishments and satisfaction. Work, learning, progress, discoveries, and even challenges should always be enjoyed.

A capacity for change and progress is important. A person earning \$100,000 a year won't be satisfied to revert to his \$30,000 yearly income – a state he was once happy in. Psychologists find that all pleasures are passing, continuous satisfaction subsides and we need to move on. Well-being is truly a journey, not a destination.

**10. Overall balance.** Happy people tend to have multiple, synergistic and interlocking goals instead of a single narrow one. They have healthy and harmonious values. They seek and live a life of equilibrium in which their needs and other people's needs are met. They know that success is not the product of sheer will-power and hard work. Street-smartness, timing, preparation, creativity, human ties, etc, all have big parts to play. They find time for hobbies, interests and meaningful relationships. Theirs is a balanced lifestyle void of bad habits and excesses, but full of nutrition, activities, rest, laughter and vitality.

Contented folks do not let competitive ambition rule their lives, instead they build deep friendships, strong marriages and happy homes. With right priorities they do not over-market themselves and neglect their self-worth and their loved ones. Neither would they let commercialism slow their growth in creativity, skills, and personal substance. Well-being and harmony would never be sacrificed for production and profit. If a sense of vision, values, and integrity is lacking, money and power are meaningless.

Those without the equilibrium cram their days with hectic socialising and entertainment. True happiness comes from coherence and balance, yet it has no boundaries! You need not set exact conditions for gratification, your gladness doesn't begin with *when* and *if*, nor with a flight to Switzerland or a golden retirement handshake. It begins anytime you wish, it begins NOW.

Little do people realise that they can be merry no matter what, and they can be happy anytime they choose, even this very minute!

We all need a few luxuries to feel some pleasure, but pleasure is a little different from happiness. Pleasure is more momentary, happiness is more lasting and enhances mental and spiritual well-being. People who retired early with lots of money found that despite the endless freedom and vacationing, there was

something missing - a sense of challenge, purpose and usefulness in life. Many of them went back to work! Job satisfaction comes not just from the pay-cheque, but from a sense of control, achievement and self-worth.

Great wealth without the right attitude and wisdom will not bring lasting happiness. Look at the late Christina Onassis, who inherited billions from her father. Her vast wealth seemed to have brought her the greatest pain and misery, until she finally killed herself. What a stupendous waste! Think of the social work, accomplishments and great missions she could have mastered, and the thrill, satisfaction, and ecstasy she would have, doing it all!

In great contrast, Kelly Stone, (sister of superstar Sharon Stone) recovered from her injury and depression to set up Planet Hope, a charity that helps homeless children. Her work gives her a great zest for living. After her break-up with Prince Charles, Lady Diana travelled to various countries to see, help and cheer up poor and sick children... It is reassuring to know that what we need are the right values, spiritual well-being, beautiful lifestyle and relationships. We don't need heaps of money and luxury, which soon bring saturation with diminishing returns. The people with the right attitude and disposition are cheerful from childhood to old age, they can weather any storm and re-discover happiness. Go on and discover yours!

## Chapter 89 More Pursuits of Happiness.

Researchers who monitor subjects over dozens of years find there is permanence in a person's happy disposition. They confirm that well-being grows on optimism, jovial habits, a sense of control, an outgoing personality, altruism, religiousness, realism, and a loving relationship. Blessed with this information, we can now put ideas into practice, in contrast to the theories given in the last chapter. The following guidelines will take you along the right path:

**1. Control, even create your thoughts and feelings.** If you run after happiness, you may be running away from it; it is inside you. Your mind is your door to well-being, because happiness hangs around how you think and feel. You are a thinking creature every minute of your life, and your thoughts, whether they are long or brief, constantly create feelings. It is not your circumstances, but your thoughts and reactions to them that determine your experience. What we see is not always reality, only our interpretation of reality. That is why we often found that something disturbing earlier was no longer disturbing later. We respond to the same situation negatively and positively at different times!

Fortunately, thinking is a voluntary function, and it is up to you to master it, to efficiently block negative emotions and bring in positive ones. Build your ability in making, finding and holding cheerful sentiments. Do this all the time. Happy thoughts bring immediate elation, they make you live, work and interact better, allowing joy to escalate. Train yourself to be euphoric inside, regardless of all the imperfections around you. Stop suspicion, resentment, fallacies, fear and frustration. Give yourself a great gift that costs little everyday - happiness. You can be as buoyant as you want, you have a choice. Dr Maxwell Maltz reminded us, 'To choose the evil of unhappiness is to choose slavery.' Now use your thoughts as a powerful tool to bring meaning, positivism and delight into your life.

If you entertain negative thoughts like: 'My boss doesn't like me.' and 'My mate doesn't seem to love me' you are heading for trouble. Here are 2 examples: Case 1. You spill a jug of sticky fruit juice on a brand new bench in a beautiful park, you see a man nearby flashing a reproaching look. You feel disparaged and think angrily: 'Have you never spilt anything yourself?' Alas, had you only realised he was only staring blankly, and had you noticed the darkening sky, which

would flush away the mesh with a torrential downpour, you would have felt differently. Case 2. Mary's mother-in-law Maggie, seeing how busy Mary is, offers to bathe the baby. Mary misconstrues this to be her failure as a capable and responsible mother and tussles with her for the baby. Maggie misjudges this as a lack of trust and gratitude and an argument ensues. Two glaring examples of people's inability to cleanse and beautify their thinking process. Keep these pointers in your memory:

1. Don't let people's low mood affect you, don't take common mood swings too personally. 2. Beware of low moods in yourself and others; tackle problems in higher moods. 3. Don't take all your thoughts too seriously. 4. Don't try too hard to change others, or to change the world. 5. Learn to let go, instead of being stubbornly right but unhappy. If you over-react, and struggle with a problem you block wisdom and optimism. Stand back and look freshly at the whole picture. 6. Don't live in the past, live for now and the future. 7. Don't attach pre-conditions to happiness; don't say I'll be happy when... You can be happy right now!

**2. Control, even mould your behaviour.** Experts find that acting and talking positively may make us feel phoney at first, but the bliss soon grows and takes root. As mentioned in Chapter 75, our motions sway our emotions, our gestures form our nature. Take advantage of this technique. Your management of your behaviour also contributes to an orderly lifestyle. A neat, organised and energetic person is a lot happier than a sloppy, shabby, sluggish one.

**3. A mastery over life.** An active life must be balanced with peace and rest, to boost your vitality and power. Happy people feel and exercise a high degree of control over their destinies. This sense of command is half the battle! Use self-declarations to boost it further. Give your mind clear and powerful directions about where and when you want your targets reached and desires fulfilled. Do this all the time and see the results! Circumstances and accessories are then drawn to you to take you to your goals. Taking charge, making decision and executing your plans are all important steps to reach your objectives. If you don't you are giving your great power and privilege to someone else. Never let grass grow under your feet or allow life to throw all sorts of rubbish at you. Break free from limiting circumstances. Many people disabled by accidents soon became reborn with new values and strength. They made do with what they had with greater determination and commitment. Hence, we see jolly paraplegics and skilful blind musicians.

Remember your mind power, and how someone appears, or telephones you when you think of them? The universe is filled with such telepathic signals and wavelengths. Exploit this magnetism to your advantage. Intensify your longing and focus to capture your goals. Use your mind to create and complete your desired experiences.

**4. Bring in external inputs of Happiness.** You have seen happiness as an inside job. Now go outside to complete the picture. Go and enjoy people's company and the many good things in life. Open up to people, most will reciprocate your friendliness. Joy is often the ability to be delighted in both big and small ways. Some of the nicest things cost nothing, like fresh air, greenery, sea breeze and pretty sunset. As we have seen in previous chapters, the simplest things can be the most satisfying. Enjoy things sparingly before you get weighed down by saturation. Coke tastes better in smaller bottles! Step out of the inertia and comfort zone. Strike a balance too, and get down to basics. Watch the little bird outside your window. He is continuously smiling, singing and searching for delicious worms. He has no time for a dull moment. He doesn't pause to whine or worry and he never gets sick... Learn from him!

Don't be self-centred. There is little meaning or purpose if you exist on your own. Depression is drawn to lonely people. Extroverts have a wider circle of friends, hence, more assistance, opportunities and rewarding experience. We tend to be hilarious among high-spirited people. Social delight helps us enormously, especially in chasing blues away. Research confirmed that widowed people, in contrast to those blessed with friendship and family, are more prone to disease and death. Those who share their problems and pain with others instead of bottling them are happier.

**5. Find something big, beyond yourself, and serve it.** There is much more to life than what we see and realise. There are endless possibilities, knowledge, adventures and new experiences; it is up to us to explore and discover the many secrets of this universe. Enlarge yourself into a life of meaning, purpose and excellence. You can do this by maximising your potential to live a life beyond that of the ordinary people, full of dreams, creativity, achievements and social contributions. You'll be thrilled to be busily committed and useful, engrossed in something challenging and fulfilling. To be happy is to make others happy, so put others first, especially those in need of help. Break free from your emotional

addictions like dependency on family, fear of the outside world, poor confidence and self-image. Boost your self-esteem, then identify your grand purpose and noble goals. Awaken and unleash your boundless energy, make life a great work of art and accomplishments. B. Disreali remarked: 'Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action.' Live a worthwhile life, plan and complete great missions that improve and beautify your life and the lives of your fellowmen.

**6. Stay Close to God, and God-loving people.** Surveys confirm that religious people on the whole have a higher level of contentment, bearing out a strong link between religion and well-being. There are less substance abuse, broken marriages, depression, and less of the various mental and physical disorders. Religious groups provide the friendship that multiplies joy and divides sadness. Those with confidants and intimates reported that they were happier; with close relationships they coped better with losses, grief and traumas. When people interact they share companionship and ideas, they enjoy some kind of empowerment and synergy. Sometimes, by cheering someone else, you cheer yourself up too. Generally, we need a sense of belonging to our family, our society and our Creator.

**7. Humility, gratitude and realism.** Despite all the preaching about positive thinking, be realistic too. Not 100% of your dreams will come true. Accept some impossibilities, respect the forces of the universe and tolerate things that are beyond your control. Often it is most relieving to admit our conceit and constraints. In other words, stay enthusiastic and optimistic, but have enough pessimism to prevent complacency and carelessness. Remind yourself you are a lot better off than others and it could be worse. Make comparisons with those less fortunate than you are, then count your blessings. A visit to the hospital stresses this point. Accept contrasting situations, and know that no pain, no pleasure; no sadness, no joy; no hunger, no sumptuousness. Suffering accentuates our enjoyment..

Capitalise on whatever is available on this good earth. If you are not enjoying life, you are wasting it. Some days may appear long, but life is short, too short for unhappiness. R. L. Stevenson noted: 'There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy.' Take advantage of freedom, nature and the wilderness. Many people don't realise what they are missing! It is not merely material possessions; it is the attitude and the readiness to find fun and fascination in ordinary things, to be happy unconditionally. Otherwise you have money

without meaning, grandeur without goals.

**8. Continue to build your love-nest.** Make an incessant effort to cultivate the intimate, fun-filled, task-sharing, sexually-warm relationship. Home is where the heart, the health and happiness are. Numerous surveys have confirmed that married people are better off than single ones, enjoying psychological support, common goals and achievements.

**Conclusion.** Happiness may elude you if you go on a wild-goose chase, so it is not easily rationalised, but you can improve your understanding of it. If you just dwell on anticipation and achievement, going places, meeting people, doing things, job-loving and top performance, jubilation, enjoyment of your colleagues, customers and loved ones, happiness will find you. John Barrymore remarked, ‘Happiness sneaks in through a door you didn’t know you left open.’

One simple thing you can do is to keep telling yourself: ‘I’ll always be cheerful and optimistic no matter what. Whining and worrying only make things worse, besides, I won’t let anything rob me of my happiness...’ Such an attitude helps instantly and tremendously! P. Sondreal suggested: ‘Happiness is never stopping to think if you are.’ That is why well-being should not be a narrow goal, it should embrace a spectrum of emotions, dreams, meaning, purpose, expectations and visions. True happiness comes from growth, and more from striving to fulfil our dreams and desires than in attaining them. It is a manner of travelling, the trip is more fun than the destination.

## Chapter 90 Change, Ongoing Improvements and Growth.

Recently, I put the following motto on the walls of my children's bedrooms:

*I'm in love with life, I can't get enough of it!  
I'm enjoying and progressing every minute of the day.*

The desire for progress is a human instinct. Deep in our hearts, we all wish we could be a better person. We know we should be wiser, more capable, productive, influential, more charitable and virtuous. Real progress requires, among other things, an ability to change, which some of us are unfortunately, reluctant to do. Others are brought up in communities that encourage traditionalism and 'sameness'. Such conservatism and monotony tend to hamper creativity, uniqueness and personal growth. Moreover, some of us may be among people who are unable to advance their own lives, much less ours. Despite these shortcomings, growth and renewal follow the pattern of the universe. Every minute, billions of new cells in our bodies replace the old ones. We are emerging as newer human beings! We are changing, for better or worse, and we are mutating, even subconsciously. It's time we break away from stagnation, and become - through personal development - self-reliant, superior and special.

**What is personal development?** We develop better when we regularly introspect about who we are and what we are becoming, and take ourselves beyond what we already know. We must adapt to the mobile conditions in a transforming world. As we evolve, we should further extend our limits and broaden our horizon. We do this by regularly exceeding our barriers. Our limits are after all, imaginary! We have greater potential than we realise. Arthur C. Clark enlightened us, saying: 'The only way to discover the limits of the possible is to go beyond them into the impossible.' Personal development means initiating change and making improvements physically, mentally and spiritually.

**Why is change and progress important?** Time is passing and the world is changing. We mustn't be trailing in the wake, otherwise we'll be tools that have gone obsolete, good for the scrap-heap. If we are standing still or not moving fast, we are in fact falling behind, because others are moving faster! Samuel Johnson



declared, 'The business of life is to go forward.' Abraham Lincoln stated, 'I don't think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday.' A Spanish proverb says: By the street of 'by and by' one arrives at the house of 'never'. The modern world is now so competitive that never-ending research, development and marketing strategies are determining the success and failure of companies. That is why we should never stop learning, everyday. Continuous development can take us to dizzy heights. Just look at the latest computer. Persistent improvements in just 40 years have turned a calculator into a magical machine. Dirt can turn into diamond, and clay into crystal; with the passing of time and temperature, they have surged in value. It is the relentless betterment of everything, big and small, that brings us such great advancement. There will always a better way of doing something, even if it is just a tiny bit better. Lao Tsu pointed out, 'That which is achieved the most, still has the whole of its future yet to be achieved.' Let us move ahead now, the world is advancing in the fast lane. Today's recipe for success may become tomorrow's ingredients for stagnation. The rewards of self-improvement are bountiful, not just for ourselves, but for others too, especially those who need our help and services. Now, where do you begin your self-improvement?

**It all depends on yourself.** If you believe you must bear with your shortcomings and problems, your belief alone can make them stay! The same belief affects your self-development. Failure is often caused by an inability to change. Those in the thick of failure, self-pity and depression, if they don't change, they don't have a ghost of a chance of turning around. Personally, I don't let grass grow under my feet. Creating your own destiny is so fulfilling, why let others decide or make it for you? Goethe wrote, 'Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth - that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too.' Once you realise that you actually control your destiny, you will harness your power and wield it. Make changes by breaking from an unproductive position. Do it now! Beginning something is half the battle; once you have started things become easier.

**It is easier than you think.** Ernest C. Wilson noted, 'Times of changes are times of fearfulness and times of opportunity, which they may be for you, depends upon your attitude toward them.' It takes courage to change, to alter habits and lifestyle, to switch jobs or start a new business. Many fear change, they are too complacent to move and they dislike uncertainty. Believe me, there is nothing to

fear. Although few of us live up fully to our ideals, improvements are possible and easier than you think. You must look honestly at yourself and identify the weaknesses and rooms for betterment, then start improving persistently. You should also emulate successful people, who are always improving something, somewhere. It is not so much your education that counts, it is the ongoing self re-education and zeal that take you nearer to your grand objectives. You can do everything in a gradual daily process, with time, all that you do will take you to greener pastures and higher mountains.

**Growth consists of little daily victories.** Someone once wrote: ‘Genius is only the power of making continuous effort.’ Succeeding in life is a daily effort; like mastering the piano, you need to practise daily. Little and often accomplish much. Louis L’Amour urged us: ‘Victory is not won in miles, but in inches. Win a little now, hold your ground, and later win a little more.’ Remember my suggestion about advancing by the minutes, days, months and years? Christopher Morley pointed out, ‘Big shots are only small shots who keep shooting.’ Growth is an endless road of self-fulfilment. It is the joy of reaching one goal, and starting another. A small goal a day is good, even a few little realistic ones that you can achieve; with time they move you well ahead in a competitive world. Here are steps to take:

Step 1. Change your values and beliefs. They alter your perception, aspirations, enthusiasm, actions and outcomes. You have the power and responsibility to create the life you desire, and to change your destiny, Claim it and use it!

Step 2. Boost your self-image. Take a few minutes for affirmation and visualisation as soon as you wake up and before you go to sleep. Assure yourself tirelessly of a new you; stronger, more attractive and capable.

Step 3. Set goals and various priorities for self development. Establish your schedules and deadlines.

Step 4. Develop a strong character and a good personality, empowered by a new sense of eagerness and adventure.

Step 5. Manage your time, your routine and habits. Ensure all your time is spent on fruitful, restful and high-value things. Form the best habits for productivity and well-being.

Step 6. Acquire knowledge and skills at a regular and prolific rate. Nothing

is holding you back. Shakespeare, a great name in the history of literature, was almost self-taught. Both Defoe and Cervantes wrote their famous books *Robinson Crusoe* and *Don Quixote* in prison!

Step 7. Market yourself and your good products and services through your people skills and contacts. Please review Chapter 56.

Step 8. Expand your horizons, and increase your overall awareness, creativity, possibilities and capacities. Dr M. Maltz noted, 'Every man is a creator. His productive imagination makes his goals limitless.' In harmony with your pursuit of change and advancement, you must leave the past and wisely adapt to the present; live and enjoy it.

Continuous progress brings lavish new experience, it also ensures that you keep stretching and scoring into a luxurious future. William Osler said, 'The best preparation for tomorrow is to do today's work superbly well.' For those who are in the doldrums, it is time to get up and go, that is why the wise always believe that 'success is never ending, failure is never final.' It is only by progressing in the right direction that you can blot out weaknesses from your life and evil from our world. Ask yourself often, are you becoming more capable and virtuous by the day?

The world has been changed and beautified by the burning desire and actions of great men and women. Take your turn now. You have cultivated your intellect and calibre, go further now to intensify your joy in knowledge, literature, music, fine arts, sports and recreation. Develop deeper wisdom, elevated tastes, and enjoy a broader experience and a larger life. Do all you can to be better today than yesterday. In 365 days you'll find much fulfilment, in a few years you'll be a force to be reckoned with. You will also benefit your loved ones, your community and country.

## Chapter 91 A Model Citizen, Gaining Reverence and Recognition.

You may not be able to control the length of your life, but you can control its width, depth and height. Greatness is not in possession and power, but in character, goodness and service to humankind. A proverb once stated, 'Pleasures are transient; honours immortal.'

**Your core and character.** Your inner qualities precede social ones. If you want a decent place in society, put your house in order first. Improve your relationship with yourself before you better your relationship with others. Be true to yourself and your moral values. Take care of your character; your reputation will take care of itself. A good reputation is a great asset, but you must earn it. You must be venerated for what you are, not what you seem to be. Excellent habits are imperative. They are not only the essence of a healthy and orderly life, they are the ingredients of the man himself! A sum total of your habits form your character. Stephen Covey noted, 'In the last analysis, what we are communicates far more eloquently than anything we say or do.' Oliver Goldsmith agreed, 'You can preach a better sermon with your life than with your lips.' Your words must be backed by deeds. Epictetus urged us, 'Act your part with honour.' The absence of integrity and character may get by temporarily, but there will be no lasting honour and success. H. Greeley reiterated this, 'Fame is a vapour, popularity an accident, riches takes wings. Only one thing endures - character.' Thomas Jefferson empowered us further: 'In matter of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like the rock.'

**Integrity.** This goes hand in hand with character, and is a quality of trustworthiness, responsibility and incorruptibility. It is something we all look for in our spouse, our employees and in everyone we associate with. Lack of this erodes everything at home, at work and in society. Falsehood lives on borrowed time and will be detected and punished sooner or later. The dishonest man hangs on a thread, he is always looking for a way out while his problems compound themselves!

Trust is one of the most important factors in your personal and professional life. Confidence cannot be restored easily by making amends and when trust is lost

you cannot win it back. Be a man of your word, and keep all your commitments and promises. Be loyal and respectful, even to those who are not around you, then you build reverence and trust from all concerned. Shakespeare proclaimed, 'No legacy is so rich as honesty.' Thomas Jefferson quipped, 'Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.' Chilton urged us to 'Prefer loss to a dishonest gain; the one brings pain of the moment, the other for all time.' When you gain trust, you will finally win respect and love too.

**Your image.** What kind of an image do you want to project to society? Do you have individuality and identity? Or are you easily swept away by the tides? Whom do you associate with? You are known by the company you keep. Do you have poise? Are your ways of moving and speaking pleasing to others? The person with composure is not jagged or overbearing. He harmonises with his surroundings; in fact he looks natural everywhere he goes. You can improve your poise with observation, practice, rich knowledge and social experience. You should fine-tune your behaviour to suit various circumstances. For example, in a certain situation you should talk less and listen more and in another, participate and laugh heartily! Next, do you exude dignity? True dignity does not arise from position, pretension and pomposity, but from balance, sincerity, humility, courtesy and graciousness.

**Impeccable conduct.** You can demand respect, but you must deserve it. You earn it with flawless mannerism, genuine politeness, natural affability and gentleness. Lord Chesterfield insisted that 'Manners must adorn knowledge and smooth its way through the world.' Show empathy and affection, they boost your influence on others. You must also have reliability, commitment, ethics and a keen sense of justice in all facets of your personal and commercial dealings, thereby winning others' confidence, praise and respect. Spread sunshine and success, health and wealth to everyone you meet. Use all your interpersonal skills to make them feel honoured, motivated and valuable. Remember Christian Bovee's words: 'The smallest courtesies sweeten life; the greater ennoble it.'

**Your People skills.** As you move around your world, always bear in mind Jonathan Swift's observation: 'Whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy, is the best bred in the company.' Remember names and birthdays of close acquaintances and loved ones. Friendship and kindness make everything easier and can make up for whatever you are lacking. Empower the people around you. Win and hold the

confidence of others. Control and convert difficult persons in your life, with your capacity to change the minds and touch the hearts of others. You get treated in life in the way you 'train' people to treat you. Seek the help of strong and successful people, jog and jet with them! Maintain strong ties with centres of influence. A mastery of communication and body language opens doors everywhere. Radiate cheer and enthusiasm. Be a beacon of inspiration and influence.

**A fountain of knowledge, expertise, courage and wisdom.** A focal point of intelligence, information, skills and power invariably draws admiration and cooperation. This is achieved through relentless learning, training and fine-tuning. Choose an occupation you enjoy, one in which you excel, serve others and win recognition. Courage includes guts, grit, heroism and moral courage. You need this to live with integrity and convictions, to shoulder responsibilities and surmount setbacks.

**Performance and contribution.** Have objectives, desire and drive, then plan and work your best and expect only the best. Your overall performance will be the result of your vitality, optimism, calibre and your capacity to initiate, manage and delegate. Creativity, competency against problems, the ability to analyse matters objectively and to make sound and timely decisions are equally important. Your service to your community counts greatly. This grows out of selflessness and empathy and the habit of helping people. Remember the old saying: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' There are countless opportunities for little acts of kindness, community projects and charity drives; get involved and get cracking.

In conclusion, let's appreciate the words of Confucius: 'There are three marks of superior man: Being virtuous, he is free from anxiety; being wise, he is free from perplexity; being brave, he is free from fear.' Now you should spend so much time progressing, and enjoying the world, that you have no time for grouch and criticism. Hereafter, you should be too great for pettiness, too courageous for fear, too virtuous for wrong.

## Chapter 92 Leadership.

On 15 February 1997, President Clinton used his emergency powers and ordered 9,300 striking American Airlines pilots back to their flight-decks. His intervention relieved the country from a massive air traffic chaos, and saved the Airline and the U.S. economy tens of thousands of jobs and some US\$200 million a day! Great leaderships have also fostered multi-racial harmony and progress in several countries. No enterprise, company or country ever produced good results or anything great, unless it was led by an exceptional personality. The president of the mammoth AT & T, Harold Geneen said, 'To my mind, the quality of leadership is the single most important ingredient in the recipe for business success.' Joseph E. Brooks commented, 'Show me a country or a company that is not doing well and I will show you a bad leader.' Tom Peters and Robert Waterman added, 'A strong person (or two) is always the cause of success in the best company.'

Basically people are easy to lead, but difficult to push; so any human undertaking or business entity needs some kind of leadership. Without it, the venture is like lost sheep without shepherds and may waver and wither. On the other extreme, mere prodding and pressure are unlikely to yield the desired results. The advantages brought by good leadership are undeniable. What then makes a good leader?

**A leader is different from a manager.** The manager administers, the leader creates. The manager maintains, the leader develops. The manager relies on systems, the leader capitalises on people and their potential. He initiates, innovates and inspires, he is a visionary and a powerhouse. A good organisation needs both managers and leaders, it needs the supplements and the balance.

**A good chief has vision.** He has plans and directions, he knows where he is going. He communicates well on these and carries out his plans to completion. He has dreams, goals and passion. Visions and strategies ensure continual success. The chief enthuses, excites and empowers others, he shapes their aspirations and swells their energy. He stimulates growth and achievement.

**He has integrity and character.** He has powerful and well-integrated core values, convictions and beliefs, and thus he can judge and respond to issues as they arise. His values safeguard his integrity, which earns confidence and trust because

he delivers what he promises. Concurrently, he has a keen sense of justice and his fairness further commands the respect of his followers and subordinates.

**He communicates clearly and influentially.** He converses well, asks intelligent questions, and listens to others with empathy. His art of moving people's wills and wishes requires unusual skills.

**He responds to change.** The leader is not just a manager, he sees the complete horizon and the long-term view. His foresight gives a clear indication of what he wants to do. He creates vision, energy and accomplishment and ensures continuous growth, even after his departure. He is proactive and he anticipates change and keeps ahead of competitors; hence, he is the first to provide new products and services to serve new needs and the changing times. Change in technology and the market place is continually monitored to organise his resources in the right direction. He realises that knowledge alone is not enough, and he needs applied knowledge, adaptability and creativity.

**He shows good example.** He does his share of hard work, and practises what he preaches. He is a mentor and model for others.

**A leader is mentally positive and disciplined.** He is a tough-minded optimist who believes that when the going gets tough, the tough gets going. His philosophies govern high levels of self control. Discipline and composure are never lost.

**He is resourceful.** His confidence and competence remain high, even in tough times. If he doesn't have an immediate answer to a given problem, the answer is never far off. He gets things done, finishes beautifully what he starts, and enables others to achieve excellent results too.

**He has unwavering courage.** Blessed with individuality and the mettle to establish his own identity in this world, he is decisive and does not waver from his decision. He seeks responsibility, and assumes full accountability for the consequences of his decisions and actions.

**A true leader values human resources and has people skills.** He recognises that human resources are the most powerful assets, while machinery and automation are neutral. He is a master in dealing with all kinds of people, in harnessing their talents, in influencing and motivating them. He understands and address The needs of his subordinates are well understood and addressed. Great faith is placed in his followers, thereby creating calibre and power in them. At the



same time, he has sensitivity and sympathy for them, and he showers them with ‘the milk of human kindness’ and the desire to win and excel. His workers are assured of rewards if they perform, and he proves it. He respects other people and their views rather than bluntly imposing his own; nonetheless, he wins people over and they willingly follow his lead.

You can train to be a good leader, as most good ones are made, not born. Here are the ways to do it:

**Have direction.** If you don’t know where you are going, will people follow? Estee Lauder noted, ‘People want to follow those who promise - and deliver - success.’ The reputable Henry Kissinger said, ‘A leader has to take people from where they are to where they have never been before.’ Know all aspects of your business and your organisation. Lead and show the way, confidently and master-handedly. Knowledge and expertise are necessities, they add to your value and charisma. Delegate, and help others to work hard and work smart too. Use synergy, concerted strength and leverage; you can’t do it alone. Which is better, 100% of your efforts or 50% of 1,000 people’s?

**Empower others** constantly, by gratitude and appreciation. No one can be a great leader unless he takes genuine pride and joy in the success of those under him. Give credit publicly, it is even better than constructive criticism. Care for your subordinates. Your kindness will never be wasted or forgotten. Foster boundless enthusiasm, which is not only infectious, but powerful. Maintain strong faith in your followers. If you trust and expect others to do well, they usually will; besides, you have given them pride and pleasure. You should be a team player as well. A leader shines but a team player fits in beautifully.

**Show excellent example.** That’s a good gift to give to others. Do your share of hard work, don’t just sit and watch. You have to act your part, and even if occasionally you have doubts, don’t show them! Your speech and action must be sure-footed and polished, strong yet refined. Communication skills are vital and all aspirations and plans must be imparted clearly. Don’t forget the body language of the boss too. Your firm feet, steady stare, sure speeches, confident and purposeful movements, your initiation and control of conversation, will single you out as the natural leader.

True leaders are not just political leaders, they also include great teachers, religious founders (like Prophet Muhammad, Jesus and Buddha); and those who led

movements for a just cause, like Lincoln and Gandhi. They have the wonderful dual roles, as masters and servants. So when you reach a position of strength and influence one day, promise me, you will lead others, not only to economic achievements, but also to social well-being and moral heights. Bear in mind too, that as a leader you should produce more leaders, not just followers!

“I learned that a great leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don’t want to do and like it.” - Harry Truman, 33rd US President.

“What you should show your employees is not the great artist you are... but the part of you that is capable of attracting the greatest number of people, and instilling in them the desire to follow you with enthusiasm and contribute to the success of the enterprise.” - Akio Morita, Sony Corp.

“Reason and judgement are the qualities of a leader.” - Tactus.

“I learned that a boss doesn’t give orders, but also...sets example...He nourishes them on what Shakespeare called ‘the milk of human kindness’, as well as with the energy necessary to win.” - B. Tapie.

“The superior leader gets things done with very little motion... He is a catalyst, and though things would not get done as well if he weren’t there, when they succeed he takes no credit. And because he takes no credit, credit never leaves him.” - Lao-Tzu.

## Chapter 93 The Successful Personality.

If we look around us, we see people who are inspired and motivated by their thoughts and habits instead of being inhibited by them. We observe those who think and act richly, gaining spiritual and physical wealth, while others are laden with emotional and material poverty. We notice individuals with vision and aspiration as against those smothered by monotony and doubts. Many are spurred by dreams and ambition, in contrast others are imprisoned in listlessness and despair. Some seek opportunity, others wait for it to knock. Many reach for the pinnacles, but many more hide in the pits. We notice those polished and adorned with culture, taste and refinement, while others behave coarsely and rudely. We watch success snow-balling while failure perpetuates itself.

We see clearly the successful personality. He is positive, hopeful, enthusiastic, kind and courageous, radiating cheer and sunshine everywhere. His conduct, speech, image and poise show the height, breadth and depth of his wisdom, knowledge, experience and achievement. The world steps aside to let him breeze through. His composition can be signified by the alphabets in SUCCESS:

S - Self-image.

U - Unwavering goals and direction.

C - Control of self and life.

C - Competence and courage.

E - Enthusiasm.

S - Self-starter.

S - Special efforts towards excellence.

### **S for Self-image.**

This is the foundation for well-being, as we have seen in Chapter 12. Listen to Dr Maxwell Maltz: 'The sunshine within you gives a radiance to you that spreads to the people around you.' A man does not simply fall into the arms of success. He may be born with a part of it, but he builds the greater part of it. The successful personality carries around the seed of greatness in his personality and character. In addition to his powerful self-esteem, he is well presented, showing an attractive

and winning disposition.. As a result he is responsible, sincere, receptive, compassionate, and empowering. He speaks and listens with great wisdom and a sense of humour. He has high ideals, broad sympathy, long patience and deep conviction, the whole package.

**U for Unwavering goals and direction.**

These comprise clear objectives, burning desire, enthusiasm, motivation, focus, determination, persistence and target-reaching; what a powerful combination. Richard B. Sheridan assured us, ‘The surest way not to fail, is to determine to succeed.’

**C for Control of self and life.**

The winner manifests his strengths but manages his weaknesses. It is insufficient to rely solely on strength, one can be done in by one’s weaknesses! He has a high level of security and wisdom, flowing from a solid core. He assumes full responsibility and control over his fate, and has power over himself, people and circumstances. Hence, he knows the importance of leverage, like the leverage of lifting pulleys and prying crowbars. A winning entrepreneur can earn 5% of 100 people’s effort, (gaining extra 500%) rather than 100% of his own. He maximises the returns of his knowledge, capabilities and resources. With self-control, he has formed good, fruitful habits. Over time, these compound and culminate into a powerful success factor, that moves like a flood or avalanche. Nothing succeeds like success.

**C for Competence and courage.**

Knowledge and skills are now necessities for any livelihood. The more competent a person is the more successful he becomes. He has fortitude, boundless energy and capacity for work and accomplishment. Can you imagine a successful person who is cowardly, weak, wavering, whimpering, weary and worried? Reckless bravery however, is useless. He must have the type of grit and guts that is supported by wisdom, calm confidence and calculated risk-taking. He must be a leader, not a follower, and be strong, tenacious, assertive and high-spirited.

**E for Enthusiasm.**

No man is an island, and the friendly and enthusiastic person will go far in the world. He deals with others in a generous and grand way, showing courtesy, a positive, caring attitude and above all, a zest for living. Mother Teresa reminded us, 'God doesn't look at how much we do, but with how much love we do it.' Ardour and vigour accomplish more than boredom. Anatole France voiced her preference: 'I prefer the errors of enthusiasm to the indifference of wisdom.' Now I remember the words of tennis star Boris Becker, who defeated the World No 1 Pete Sampras at a ATP Championship Match in 1996. He recalled his arrival at the game as a human dynamo: 'I was so pumped up. It was incredible. I was covered in goose-pimples. I felt just about to take off the ground and fly into Nirvana.' That's the dynamite we need but can only wish for!

### **S for Self-starter.**

The winner initiates things. He is not only a starter, he moves at a faster pace too. In Chapter 41, I praised the ability to 'make things happen' which turns us from a dead volcano into a thunderous one. Appius Claudius remarked, 'Every man is the architect of his own fortune.' We need badly the action which starts the locomotion towards achievement and fortune. Naturally, those with much drive and many go-getting activities gain more from life. Success also breeds more energy, which fuels further performance! It is an invigorating circle, in contrast to the vicious circle of failure.

### **S for Special efforts towards excellence.**

Remember my motto: Go the extra mile and give your best to the world? The successful person knows that his rewards in life will be proportionate to his diligence and perseverance, and he performs each little act to the best of his ability. He repeats this daily, weekly and monthly. He is successful through the years. Most spectacular of all, he handles frustration very well and loves the word NO, he does not create his limits by fearing rejections. Whatever is worth beginning and doing is worth finishing well. As a result of his efforts, our winner attains elevated taste, greater intelligence and wisdom, matured judgement and clear values.

Everyone must struggle to succeed. Even our biological base demands that. When we fail, we are flattened by fatigue and frustration; we'll find it harder to get up again. When we succeed, we not only rise to continuous good performance and

applause, we can even achieve greater excellence. We flow with the joy of harnessing our potential, manifesting our capabilities and savouring the rewards. The best way for us is to scramble to reach a modest plateau at a young age. The rest becomes easier when we start using our resources and leverage.

For the victor, success has become a lifestyle. He only needs to be alive and eager, to keep the tidal wave rolling on. He has high-mindedness, which swells his heart, lifts his spirit, and peak his performance. The champion is resourceful, aspiring, goal-reaching, optimistic, organised, efficient and persevering. He deals creatively and effectively with the harsh realities of life, and marshals great competence against problems. The successful person has the engine of an optimist and the emergency brakes of a pessimist. In a free-flowing, ever-advancing way, he gets what he wants from life by providing valuable products and services. He knows the grand finale is more important than an applauded entry. He keeps the flame of success burning brightly and perpetually.

My best news for you is that the one who plays best wins, and the one who wins plays best. Success rolls on; nothing succeeds like success. While the unfortunate are patching their leaking roofs, repairing their broken tools and vehicles, or dying by inches labouring in the sweltering heat; the winners are in their air-conditioned comfort, calm, composed, clear and clever, advancing fast in the world. While the poor chap is facing the music the champion is out dancing! For the ordinary guy, the occasional performance or luck is not kindled by constancy, perseverance and powerful habits. The winner on the other hand, has gathered a momentum, like a roller-coaster or a stupendous avalanche, reinforced by the habits and drive that started the ball rolling in the first place. Blessed with more rewards and amenities, he accelerates further! He builds for himself a huge, synergistic, compounding and unstoppable might. I know you can be that shooting star or shining sun, if you only want to. Go for it!

“Desire accomplished is sweet to the soul.” - Proverbs XIII : 19.

## Chapter 94 The Powerful Synergy of Your Resources.

The great Thomas Edison once observed, ‘If we all did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves.’ What is the point of having abilities if we don’t use them? We should in fact go a step further to use them concertedly! Let us assemble them into a potent success machinery, with an orchestrated power to achieve greater goals. Here we have **synergy**. It is now widely recognised that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. Technically, if a beam supports 1 tonne, 4 beams can support 5 tonnes or more. In other words, two winners working together achieve greater success than they would working individually, especially if their functions are interwoven to help each other. A Swedish proverb illustrates this point beautifully, ‘When a blind man carries a lame man, both go forward.’

If the Spice girls and the Beatles had sung individually, I doubt they would be that famous. Likewise, if the USA were 50 countries instead of 50 federated states, it wouldn’t have enjoyed such peace and security, and such economic, military and scientific supremacy. For this reason many countries in Europe are awaiting the formation of the European Union or the United States of Europe. Likewise, the success of a well-managed business with a \$100,000 capital is likely to be greater than 10 businesses with \$10,000. This is not just the benefits of synergy, but of economies of scale, where you can bargain and buy cheaper raw materials, and have cheaper production and marketing processes. Reciprocal and interlocking business operations also benefit from synergy. If a big car rental company, also repairs cars, sells used cars, parts, tyres and petrol, think of the advantages it is enjoying! The might of synergy is indisputable.

Let us take another example, if you have knowledge, calibre, wisdom, courage, vision, financial resources, a sense of humour, wit, eloquence, burning desire, determination, drive, creativity, empathy, confidence and leadership, all combined together, think of the ground you would cover as a politician or community leader!

Another process that supports synergy in a forceful way is accumulation. There are few overnight successes, but many years of hidden sweat and tears. All the harvests that people reap in their lives are the totals of numerous little

decisions, efforts and accomplishments compounded over the years. A similar way to maximise the output from your assets is through the **culmination** and **concentration** of all your powers. You would be surprised by the results if you focus all your resources on a single point. You would cut like a laser.

As mentioned in Chapter 51, when you reach higher planes of success, your capacities for distinction are more sophisticated and they include: Drive; the capacity to overcome problems and complexities, to communicate and originate ideas, to handle and motivate people, to respond calmly, objectively and effectively; a knack for organising and running large enterprises, and the aptitude for social status, leadership and greatness.

Zig Ziglar noted, 'Success is the maximum utilisation of the ability that you have.' Now I want you to gather all the ingredients for success and happiness you have been learning from me (please review the chapters) and put it in a precious package for yourself. Don't miss out on any important tool, gather all of them now: Love for the world, the capacity to find good everywhere, excellent health and vitality, a purpose in life, moral values, strength of character, positive mental attitude, powerful self-image, hobbies built on talents, etiquette, communication and interpersonal skills, winning image and charisma, thirst for knowledge, prosperity-consciousness, dreams, goals, burning desire, creativity, faith, mind power, the subconscious, visualisation, affirmation, visions, strategies, priorities, seizure of opportunities, enthusiasm, drive, focus, good memory, time management, discipline, gratitude, contentment, job-loving and 'flow', determination, perseverance, thriftiness, observance, inquisitive and enterprising capacity, fortitude, spirituality, optimism, excellent disposition and daily responses, mastery of habits, street-smartness, happy home, growth, a model-citizen, leadership, wisdom and virtues.

Hereafter, let this unified and formidable conglomerate of all your powers constantly transform your fears into faith, concerns into confidence, and oppositions into opportunities. Let all these qualities fill your hearts and souls and take roots there. Harmonise and integrate them, harness and use them all the time. I have no doubt how successful and happy you will be!



## Chapter 95 Staying Young.

Many ancient Chinese emperors went on the relentless search for an elixir of eternal youth. Today, the fervent quest has not let up, especially among wealthy ladies! For us, it is more realistic to pack more youthful and lively years into our given life span. We must truly live, not merely exist. It is awful to sit around moping and mourning. Enjoying life to the full is perhaps the best way to lengthen it. Most experts believe that if you control your alcohol and cholesterol intake, mind your nutrition, stop smoking, exercise regularly, sleep adequately and keep a stress-free schedule, you can slow the ageing process. Perhaps our greatest loss is the life that dies inside us while we are alive, the life rejuvenated by humour, optimism, vitality and enthusiasm.

Ageing is a complex biological process. While the physiological witch-hunt continues, all the contributory factors have yet to be clearly identified. The damaging effects of free radicals are widely accepted, so are the benefits from anti-oxidants which police and neutralise the excesses of free radicals. Anti-oxidants are believed to slow ageing and are found in essential nutrients like vitamins A, B, C, E, beta-carotene, manganese, zinc and selenium.

**Nutrition.** A deficient diet accelerates ageing and also causes skin disorders. Vitamin A is found in dark leafy vegetables, carrots and cantaloupe. It helps with moisturising and the shedding of dead cells, and keeps the skin supple. Generally the darker the leaves of vegetables the more nutritious they are, and the longer they are soaked or cooked the greater the loss of vitamins. Carrots are good for the eyes too, have you ever seen a rabbit with glasses? Excessive vitamin A intake can become toxic, and beta-carotene (better than A) is a safer form of vitamin A because the body converts beta-carotene to suit itself. Zinc, found in beef, eggs and seafood, helps the skin to make repairs. Vitamin C are found in juices, fruits and vegetables. Adequacy and balance of all vitamins, minerals and nutrients are important. Some people went on diet, and due to shortages in certain nutrients, lost much weight and a lot of hair too. Hair and skin cells are continuously reproducing and they are sensitive to such deficiencies.

The word antioxidant is becoming familiar these days. It is an agent that prevents reactions and damages in the body caused by oxygen, peroxides, and other toxic compounds among the free radicals. This substance protects the body

against cancer, diseases, and delays ageing, and is derived from beta carotene, selenium and vitamins A, C and E. Alpha hydroxyl acids (AHAs) are the anti-ageing and anti-wrinkle chemicals now found in the market and dispensed in various skin care products. AHAs include glycolic acid and other acids found in various kinds of food, such as fruits, sugar cane and milk. According to Dr Janice Teal, the award-winning pharmacist from Atlanta, USA, more AHAs does not mean greater effectiveness, as some people may develop skin irritation.

The anti-ageing foods now widely recognised are: Fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds, wild rice, herbs, garlic, legumes, green tea and fish (a good source of fatty acids, selenium, and co-enzyme Q10) The key to good nutrition is volume-control, variety and balance. Scientific research has proven that reduction in intake and cholesterol delays ageing and increase life span in animals. Besides, obesity causes droopy skin after weight-loss, not to mention strings of health problems. Variety and moderation are advisable, if you take too much of a certain vitamin, it is not only useless, it becomes harmful. Variety and equilibrium are ideal.

Generally, we cannot split health, happiness and youthfulness. They go together. Experts conclude that happy attitude, overall balance and health are vital ingredients for beauty and youthfulness.

**Exercise, sleep and rest.** Regular exercise, consistent eating and sleeping schedules and good calorie-intake are important. So are coherent marriage, career and social success. Equalise your mental and physical activities too. Research has identified 3 areas of longevity in the world. These are mountainous, agricultural regions with active physical work in the fresh air, coupled with little emotional stress, and a low-fat, low-protein, natural diet. I have little doubt that gardening, growing fruits, vegetables and crops, and eating them, are a wonderful combination for long life.

**Thoughts, anticipation and inclinations.** You should wake up every morning feeling energised, in anticipation of a lovely day. Conversely, you can think your way into old age too. In expecting, acting and feeling the advent of age you unwittingly speed up the process. The tapering of physical and mental activities supports this acceleration. This parallels the widespread finding that earlier retirement often shortens people's life. Many have retired, not just from work, but from life! A number of elderly develop a mental attitude of listlessness

and worthlessness, and quicken their ageing mechanism, through their attitude, thoughts and subconscious. Instead they should instil into their psyche that 65 is the dawn of wisdom, and the onset of the most fruitful, meaningful and exciting season. Don't let your mind or body retire. No one should retire from life at any age. You are as young as you think and feel. It was stated in Proverbs 23:7, 'As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.'

**Habits and lifestyle.** A Spanish proverb says, 'A good life prevents wrinkles.' Your habits and expressions, facial stretches and frowns also increase the signs of decline. You're likely to spoil your life by living too rigidly. There's little use in worrying about money, job and health, worry doesn't improve things. Stress takes great toll on people's youthfulness; this is noticeable and indisputable. Stop concern, over-reacting, fear and anxiety. Another youth-killer is the cigarette; where there is smoking there is ageing and sagging. The deadly effects of tar is medically documented. Go instead for great art, fine wines and good food! Delightful living takes substantial skills and talents. Amidst the sunshine, green fields and blossom, there should be excitement, freedom, jokes and a plenty of laughter. Grow fruits and flowers. Travel and explore new and fascinating places. Relax and relish the scenery and sunset. Read more and widen your sphere of life. Treasure friendship and people's company. Look at the good side of everybody. Stay active by using your time and expertise to help people in your community. The person who lives creatively will move enthusiastically, and stay in the sway and swing of things.

**Spiritual and emotional well-being.** This is important, and that is essentially why married men and women on the whole live longer. There is a certain life force which fights disease, heals wounds quickly and makes us feel on top of the world. A new research in the USA showed that a purposeful, mentally-active life, coupled with a positive and refreshed outlook is the key to staying young. Maintain verve and vigour. Keep doing all the things that make you happy, and keep searching for more ways towards fulfilment. You are never too old for pals and pets, dreams and dolls. Don't stop learning. Keep sharpening and adjusting your skills for excellence. As you grow older, gather more wisdom and wonder. Maintain a childlike spirit that looks for new adventures and nice surprises everyday. Try new things. If you remain young at heart you'll always see the golden gleam behind the clouds, and you'll never lose the urge to hope, to dream

and to laugh. You'll have a long time reaching advanced years, if you maintain love, kindness, joy and the youthful spirit and charm that breed true happiness. A proverb says: 'If you would live long, open your heart.' Another stated, 'Everyone is the age of their heart.'

**Employing the subconscious regularly.** Your subconscious mind, cheerful spirits, virtuous and harmonious ways will never grow senile. Generate and hold these qualities enduringly and you'll remain young at heart, and in body too. Visualise the miraculous rejuvenating powers of your subconscious moving through your bodies like a magic wand. Take deep breaths regularly, and feel renewed, energised and exhilarated, radiating sparkle, zeal and zing.

As we advance in years, let's gather wisdom, with a matured mind and a child-like heart. Let's not act our age! We cannot resist the passing years, but we can grow with grace and charm. The process of ageing can still be delayed. Even if we can't slow it down, we can just sit back and enjoy every minute of it!

"Insatiable curiosity is important to staying young. Youthful indifference means youthful senility." - Dr Maxwell Maltz.

"He begins to die who quits his desires." - George Herbert.

"There is no end there is no beginning. There is only the infinite passion of life." - F. Fellini.

"You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments when you have really lived are the moments when you have done things in the spirit of love." - Henry Drummond.

## Chapter 96 Building Balance, Wisdom and Virtues on Success.

It is encouraging to know that we continue to mellow and mature psychologically throughout our lives. Mentally and spiritually ripened and balanced people have mastery over themselves, yet they exude virtues and an older wisdom. They are quietly powerful despite their appearance as gentle, ordinary people. John Ruskin, the English writer maintained that ‘The highest reward for man’s toil is not what he gets for it but what he becomes by it.’ I believe we should sooner or later achieve a beautiful equilibrium and settledness, particularly in the 3 key areas of family, work and leisure activities.

**1. Balance.** In building balance, growth rather than perfection, and discipline instead of rigidity should be the goal. Strive for clarity and peace of mind with calm control of your resources. Have determination instead of dejection. Use flow, not force, and productivity, not pressure. Moderation is vital, otherwise, can financial success compensate for bad health or a failed marriage? You must learn how to have just enough and not too much of everything, otherwise you reach saturation and boredom. This means you have plenty of optimism to provide enthusiasm, a bit of pessimism to prevent pitfalls, and sufficient realism to see that there are things within and beyond your control. Balance also means you keep the right priority. In their extremes, some people take nothing into consideration while others take account of everything, with scrutiny and endless debates!

Successful people live a life of equilibrium, fulfilling their needs and other people’s in a harmonious way. They divide time between work, hobbies, creative and healthy pursuits, and meaningful relationships. They don’t let ambition and greed dominate their lives, instead they have deep friendships, strong marriages and happy homes. Theirs is a balanced lifestyle void of bad habits and excesses, but full of nourishment, activities and rest, excitement and peace.

**2. Wisdom.** This is the product of good attitude, knowledge, experience, and reasoning. It brings decorum, prudence and vision. In fact it has common sense, street-smartness, acumen, sharp perception, strong insight, subtle intelligence, sound judgement and composure all put together. It needs to grow from the ground of good character, objectivity and neutrality, unmuddled by surroundings and emotions. Wisdom helps you to face and solve the many

problems in life, because as you know well by now, it is not what happens to you that matters, it is what you do about it. Cultivate the above qualities in yourself, because you may inherit vast wealth, without the desired wisdom.

Prudence adorns one with discretion and caution. One is street-smart and thorough in all facets and levels of life, in case danger or deceit lurks in the dark. Study all the facts before you act, all the risks before you whisk away. There should always be poise before passion, reflection before reaction. So think and plan far ahead. Even animals work in summer to provide for winter. In human relation, prudence is much needed too. Forego temporary comfort or gain to enjoy the long-term goodwill and support of friends and business associates. Likewise, you should understand someone's character before you try to please him or win him over, you might do the reverse. Fortune is helped along by prudence and enterprise. Certain type of eminence go in and out of style, but wisdom is permanent. It is a strong foundation for building virtues.

**3. Virtues.** The basis for charity is understanding, appreciation and goodwill. Have respect for other people, their needs and hardship. Put yourself in their shoes to fight life's many battles, instead of treating them as pawns and puppets for selfish ends. If you value others and see good in them, you tend to have higher self-respect and humility, and to find goodness everywhere.

Humility holds peace, poise and power. It also has the capacity for sincerity, understanding, contentment and maturity. Gandhi, Lincoln, Prophet Mohammed and Jesus are revered for it. Interestingly, some people pretend to be rich, but have nothing. Others act poor, but own a fortune. A Danish proverb observed, 'The nobler the blood, the less the pride.' Humility separates confidence from conceit, and it is always the secure who are humble. We need not boast about our achievement, nor complain about our suffering. There is no humiliation in humility, it is not self-disparaging or self-denial. On the contrary, it evolves from a confident and calm view of life. There is no weakness, but strength that grew out of clear understanding. That puts our success in the right perspective without arrogance and haughtiness.

Humility is a strange thing, the minute you think you have it, you have lost it. The strength that comes with confidence can easily be lost in conceit. One dark side of pride is that it sees no room for trial and error, and improvements, which are the basis for progress. Arnold H. Glasow's words of caution were: 'Conceit is

the quicksand of success.’ One way of cultivating humility is to remind ourselves that we are indebted to many people, our parents, benefactors and Almighty God. Instead of making us feel insignificant, humbleness should remind us of our valuable part in this great universe. No one can succeed alone, or even survive alone. Through humility we grow without complacency and presumption, to reach maturity, wisdom and altruism.

Altruism comprises kindness, caring, helping and giving. Life is too short and precious for us to be idling and contributing nothing. Our well-being is a lesson in love. Charles Dickens wrote, ‘No one is useless in the world who lightens the burdens of another.’ In this materialistic world, some tend to think that being prosperous is more important than having a meaningful, purposeful life. In fact, money is just convenience and an asset to help ourselves, our family and our fellowmen towards material and spiritual well-being. Wealth should not be the end, but the means to an end. Your altruism reaches a high plane when your care for others outweighs your concern for yourself.

In life - apart from lottery-winnings - there are few Santa Clauses popping up from nowhere to place bags of gold at your feet. Fewer, if they had to squeeze through the dirty chimney. No movie-producer is going to break down your door to sign you up as a star either. You have to help others, to be helped; to give, in order to receive. You don’t get something for nothing, you must pay a price. Dr Maxwell Maltz warned of selfishness: ‘It robs you of emotional and spiritual security, leaving you an empty human...If you receive, learn to give in return to others who are in desperate need of good will and compassion...Which shall it be, selfishness or self-fulfilment?’

Start by helping in social work, community projects and fund-raising programmes. Participate in social and governmental schemes that train the young, rehabilitate the delinquents and drug-addicts, and help the distressed and homeless. Visit the sick. Nowadays, celebrities are contributing much to the community. When we seriously consider what really matters most to the world and its people, we begin to think in larger terms than I, me, mine and yesterday, today and tomorrow. We begin to realise how little we have done and how much we can do.

Sincerity, truthfulness and faithfulness are important facets of life as we interact with others, they shape our future. Confucius declared: ‘Sincerity and truth are the basis of every virtue.’ Be loyal to your spouse, friends, employer and

business associates.

Have receptivity and empathy. Cherish your friends. Think twice before you presume you have outgrown them, they have hidden talents and qualities and you may never find friends like them. Open your door for friendship, enlightenment and knowledge. Only fools shut their minds and ears. Mutual appreciation and understanding are among the best gifts in life, they add to a society's harmony and well-being. So give a friend a gentle pat on the back, reach out to your loved ones, hold your mate's hands, hug each other warmly... We have a crucial choice in life, we can approach life with grievance or contentment, in a laughing or frowning style, as a creative or a critical person, as a lover or hater, as a giver or taker.

Courtesy, patience and tolerance are absolute treasures in human interaction. There are many good points in everyone, value and enjoy those qualities. B. Franklin suggested the best policy: 'I will speak ill of no man, and speak all the good I know of everybody.' When you judge others, it may be an indication of your own prejudice or inferiority. Mother Teresa advised, 'If you judge people, you have no time to love them.' The British writer G. Chesterton remarked, 'The real great man is the man who makes every man feel great.' Washington Irving noted, 'An inexhaustible good nature is one of the most precious gifts of heaven, spreading itself like oil over the troubled sea of thought, and keeping the mind smooth and equable in the rough weather.' Gentleness and tolerance work wonders, and they usually go with self discipline; all are crown jewels in a person's character.

Let us find and develop more possibilities, for growth, balance and beauty, let us appreciate life on earth and adore this universe, and bring increasing well-being for everyone.



## Chapter 97 More Morality, Less Misery.

### **The present scenario.**

In this world many people have swimming pools, others are struggling to keep their heads above water. Some cry tears of joy while many lament in sorrow. Jonathan Swift noted, 'Nothing is so hard for those who abound in riches as to conceive how others can be in want.' The income gap between the rich and poor is big and widening, yet many are oblivious of it. Ruthless ambitions and moral decay is becoming widespread. Amidst economic abundance, many of us starve, not just physically, but spiritually.

The lack of spirituality shows in the global expenditure on the arms race, which has an annual budget approaching US\$1 trillion! It is amazing that humans, wiser and more intelligent than animals, still use guns and bombs to settle differences. History has revealed us as atomic giants and ethical dwarfs, Martin Luther bemoaned this, 'War is the greatest plaque that can afflict humanity; it destroys religion, it destroys states, it destroys families.' The money spent yearly on weapons, drugs and alcohol, lost in corruption, wasted in huge income disparity and idleness are in trillions of dollars. Just think what we could do for the world with these funds. Pricks on our conscience come from the millions of needy and suffering. Take for example, the estimate by UNICEF of child prostitutes, which in Asia alone numbered 640,000! The high rates of teenage pregnancies, cohabitation, single-parents and divorces, coupled with the decline of the nuclear family, are a great threat to the mental and spiritual health of society, and this increases social disorders and crime. It is high time morality and religion are embedded in our economic and political policies.

### **The causes.**

Misery arises from: 1. Illiteracy. 2. Lack of nutrition and medi-care resulting in diseases and famines. 3. Incoherent families or broken marriages. 4. Racial, territorial and political conflicts. 5. Injustice. 6. Uneven distribution of incomes, and poverty. (No doubt there are unequal efforts and achievement, but uneven distribution is also caused by tax evasion, greediness of the rich, corruption, the unjustifiable use of power and lack of democracy). Many politicians should

remember: That which is morally wrong cannot be politically right.

There are many roots of evil. Take the common, everyday example of vice and violence on the mass media. The quantity shown in TV and cinemas is shocking. There seems to be endless shouting and shooting, contriving and conning, arguments and brutal fights, torture and killings; turning humans into hyenas. What a culture to display, to develop and to keep! Have we no sense of shame? It is appalling how governments and communities could condone these, or even turn their coats to enjoy or propagate such degraded human behaviour. The impact on society is very grave. I am speechless. Words fail me here...

This is where the seeds of misery are sown. If children and adults see cunning and cruelty, wantonness and wickedness as an integral part of life, they will unconsciously learn and assume such roles. The world is so rich in variety, beauty, scenery, wonder, opportunities and experiences, why should we immerse ourselves in torment and grief on the screen? The way I see it, even junk TV and magazines are bad enough, especially those supporting superstitions, voodoo, black magic, social misfits, weird clans and sects. I think they should be curtailed. Whatever happened to music, humour, science, nature, wild life, sightseeing or religious teaching? Have they never thought of imparting ping-pong or piano skills, engineering or economics, even handicrafts or invention ideas on TV? Let this chapter be a challenge to law-makers, community leaders, parents and teachers. Let them search their hearts and scratch their conscience.

Evil is also brewed by ignorance of one's potential, and by a lack of moral conviction. It also springs from false beliefs. We have created wars under some strong misconceptions: That competition, territorial disputes, force and aggression are natural and necessary; that life is a competitive, dog-eat-dog game, not a complementary and co-operative one; that the end (gains, settlement of disputes) justifies the means (exploitation, fighting); that you can derive good from bad and peace from war. Man's selfish greed for wealth and power clouds his conscience and this brings more vice and problems to society.

Psychologically, cruel acts can further develop cruel attitudes, until actions and attitude boost each other in an escalating spiral. When people are no longer bothered by anguish, they begin to inflict agony on others. Eventually they become brutal to shield themselves from brutality. One global danger is that, when people live amidst injustice and conflicts, they tend to become insensitive to cruelty,

eventually they may even perpetuate evil themselves. This explains why in war time, soldiers become heartless and they kill with ease, then more atrocities are committed. Those who start a war should remember, two wrongs do not make one right; they only bring more wrongs. Over the years, war criminals who gassed or buried thousands never questioned whether what they did was right or wrong. They thought their obsessive missions outweighed everything else, even their conscience and moral laws.

The mind and heart are the basis of human thoughts, words, actions and the various outcomes. Many forms of misfortunes are man-made, be it poverty, conflicts or bloodshed. Even seemingly natural disasters like erosion, flooding and famines are caused by humans, through long periods of carelessness and complacency. If we populate a poorer country with the diligent and progressive German and Japanese people, I believe a better picture would emerge after 20 years, or sooner!

Fortunately there are rewards and retribution in this life. Take a case in point: It was thrilling to hear that the suffering of Laszlo Tokes, a Romanian priest (who protested against the cruel dictatorship of President Ceausescu) actually flared a revolution that deluged Romania and downed Ceausescu in 3 days! Similar punishments have emerged around the globe. Meanwhile, let us dress the world's wounds. Let us substitute bread for bombs, health for hunger, peace for pain, virtue for violence. Let us find the cures.

### **The likely cures.**

It is reassuring to know there are still redeeming features in us, Kind acts further breed kinder attitude in a virtuous (and not vicious) spiral. We need to cultivate sensitivity and empathy, otherwise, we become numb to other people's anguish. Fairness, and provision of welfare and amenities on the part of governments will eliminate much of the jealousy, spite and lawlessness among citizens. While much violence comes from external inputs, more is generated from the core. A person with neither moral codes nor control of his emotions is at risk, as grudge and vengeance are breeding grounds of wickedness and crimes. Imagine such a person leading a country, or its government troops, or the rebellion army!

The world comprises people; its future and welfare start at the individual level, before things move out into society. The civilians, parents, teachers,

community and national leaders must instil moral values daily. They have very weighty responsibilities indeed.

Much of the earth's suffering would go if people could find love, warmth and fun at home, instead of looking for excitement elsewhere. Every infant should be lured to healthy sports, reading, music, arts and science..., the list is long. Each must be taught the perpetual integrity of siding righteousness against wrongdoing. Maturity and wisdom are important, they give us values and virtues, and shields us from sin. Above all, everyone must be loved.

The elimination of evil can only be done with the spread of love, goodness and justice among all. Rockefeller, the American statesman reminded us, 'Never forget that the most powerful force on earth is love.' Dr Joyce Brothers supplemented this: 'But the miracle that still does most to lengthen life, to make it happy, is the oldest miracle we know. It is the miracle of love... people who are good are happy.' To change the world we must change the hearts, the values and beliefs within; we must instil love and understanding. Religious guidance and practices are the best ways to go about this.

Religion is a powerful force on earth, embraced by some 1,900 million Christians, 1,200 million Muslims, 760 million Hindus, 340 million Buddhists and millions of others. Imagine a world without a creed! Furthermore, religious bodies help us cope better with personal losses and failures, especially when crises are insurmountable, and are likely to compound themselves. Spirituality provides hope, inspiration, solace, a meaning in life with something to live and die for; it brings acceptance of self, life and the world.

Religious groups improve social belongings and erase loneliness and despair. Love is always in the mosques and churches and other places of worship, where people run to in moments of difficulties and desperation. Moral knowledge and principles are for living and acting rightly. They bring with them moral courage, uprightness and strength of character.

Sociologist and related experts surveyed and found that religious people gave more to charity than the non-religious ones, which is not surprising. Religious consciousness takes people out of the narrow I-Me-Mine world, into one with greater concern for others. Consequently, this led to the set up in various countries of hospitals, schools, shelters, care and counselling centres for the disturbed and distressed. Religion spreads kindness, forgiveness and peace, which

the world needs badly. A common religious saying is: 'Love your enemy.' I think it is a good idea. It would embarrass them, make them feel foolish and soften them!

A belief in God makes society wholesome. A wholehearted submission to God's teaching and grace makes the world a better place. Otherwise, politically-made laws and wishes can turn society upside down as they have done in history, when perpetrators of wars and bloodshed turned their backs to God. Francis Bacon stressed this point, 'They that deny a God, destroy man's nobility... and if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature.' Lenin, following Marx, hated the religious and believed that Christianity, preaching humility, should be removed. Hitler believed that 'the will to power' had replaced God, and started the horrific and devastating Second World War.

All the following have big parts to play: Governments, welfare institutions, eradication of corruption, guns and drugs control, liquor laws, parents, teachers, religious bodies, social ties, friendship, and lastly, ourselves. The lives of children also bear testimony to our success or failure as parents and governments. You can tell the direction and future of a nation by looking at how its youngsters are developing. As they learn and grow, we must impart to them spiritual values beyond money and mansions, dollars and diamonds, beyond material interests.

It is time we befriend right and banish wrong, and teach righteousness to the young and old. The recognition of morality is only half the battle, it is the practice and perfecting of it that completes our world mission. How worthless it is, to have affluence without aim, opulence with no objectives, and prosperity void of purpose. Let us have healthy competition rather than envy; generosity against greed; understanding, reconciliation and forgiveness instead of suspicion, vengeance and war. It is time earth-saving projects replaces nuclear tests, and care and harmony are in place of neglect and conflict. Let's make a concerted effort towards social well-being and world peace. Let's solve environmental issues, preserve green habitats, eradicate illness and famines, end poverty and hunger, and settle disputes and conflicts.

We can do it now, we can start immediately, from within ourselves, our homes and neighbourhoods. This would be a better world if we could love others as we love ourselves, and if the power of love could replace the love of power!

We fervently hope that soon the human race would find some kind of a spiritual revival with a flood of charity, goodwill and love; a world family and

brotherhood of man; the unity of various religions to spread morals and to pray in unison. That will be the day!

“The greatest men in all ages have been lovers of their kind. All true leaders of men have it. Faith in men and regard for men are unfailing marks of true greatness.” - Emerson.

“The only medicine for suffering, crime, and all the other woes of mankind, is wisdom.” - Thomas H. Huxley.

“Morality is the best of all devices for leading mankind by the nose.” - Nietzsche.

“Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing wonder and awe - the starry heavens above me, and the moral law within me.” - Immanuel Kant.

“Who is mighty? One who makes an enemy into a friend.” - Hebrew proverb.

“Resentment and anger, these are foul things. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord.” - Ecclesiasticus.

“Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love.” - Martin Luther King Jr.

## Chapter 98 A Moral Duty to Mankind.

We have seen misery brought by the lack of morality. We realise that life is after all, too short and priceless for pettiness, heartlessness and conflicts. There is now the pressing need to bring good into the world. The beautiful writing of William Penn amplifies life's preciousness and purpose: 'I expect to pass through life but once. If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to my fellow being, let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again.' Martin Luther King, Jr. echoed this sentiment: 'Life's most persistent and urgent question is, What are we doing for others.'

We must, to give meaning to our lives, find and serve something big, something beyond ourselves. One way, is to lose ourselves in others and put them first, especially those badly in need of help. William James stressed this point: 'The most important thing in life is to live your life for something more important than your life.' Gloria Wade-Gayles concurred on this, 'What matters is that we recognise our smallness in the universe and see kindness as the only avenue toward a larger self.'

**Let's make our lives worthwhile.** Albert Einstein proclaimed, 'Only a life lived for others is worth living.' That is the way to go and we have so much wonderful work to do. On the contrary, when we stop making contributions, we begin to die spiritually. The famous German writer Goethe concluded, 'A useless life is an early death.'

Personally I think it is a shame for someone to hang around for 75 years and just walk away without contributing something. Kahlil Gibran commented, 'If your knowledge teaches you not to rise above human weaknesses and misery and lead your fellowmen on the right path, you are indeed a man of little worth and will remain such till judgement day.'

In great contrast, Mother Teresa and others lived lives marked by priorities, purpose and peace. The George Soros' Foundation in New York spends over US\$300 million a year on charities! Lionel Richie and Michael Jackson got together and created the historic *We Are The World* song for Ethiopian relief. Performed by 43 celebrities, the song eventually raised almost US\$50 million. Pop stars still team up regularly for concerts to give to AIDS, cancer and various

causes. The Make A Wish Foundation in the U.S. helps to make wishes come true for terminally-ill children.

We live life to its fullest when we live for a worthy cause. We earn our normal living by what we get, but we make a meaningful life by what we give. Besides, in giving, we get more, as the saying 'The more you give, the more you receive' goes. Our successful Oprah Winfrey revealed her secret: 'My prayer to God every morning on my knees is that the Power that is in the universe should use my life as a vessel or vehicle for its work.' Her wishes were more than answered! Mother Teresa and many other great people also enjoyed this spiritual awakening believed that their actions were directed by divine forces in the universe. Now, you can take this same path to greatness. Start now!

**Our God-given psyche feels the joy of doing good.** Each of us has the conscience, the innate leaning towards charity. Many are either too busy or bashful to do something. We need to take courage and initiative, and act. The distinguished writer George Bernard Shaw remarked, 'This is the true joy of life, the being used for a purpose recognised by yourself as a mighty one; ...the being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances...' John A. Holmer supplemented this: 'There is no experience better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.' If you bring happiness to others you just cannot keep it from yourself. No one can dispute that doing good makes us feel good; this is because when we love, we feel noble and saintly.

**Love.** We are co-dependent on each other - though some of us may not realise - like a tree that is part of the forest, a wave that is part of the sea, we cannot separate ourselves from one another. We are all part of a vast ocean of love. Loving others open the door to the treasure-chest of God. Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do things beautifully. Hence our duty to society and love for humanity should combine nicely to provide that needed impetus and results. Interesting to note, we can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving! When we love, giving comes naturally. Giving is gaining, just as working is winning. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross enthused, 'If we make it our goal to live a life of compassion and unconditional love, then the world will indeed become a garden where all kinds of flowers can bloom and grow.' Mother Teresa reiterated, 'We can cure physical diseases with medicines but the only cure for loneliness, despair and helplessness is love.'



**Promote acts of kindness.** We find that whenever we decide or act with kindness, we usually make the right move. It is high time we do little acts of kindness on an individual level. Let's do it candidly and randomly throughout the day, making daily charity a part of our lives. The smallest act is worth more than the biggest intention. There is no such thing as a little unimportant act of kindness; all such acts are valuable. The influence and benefits of kind words and good deeds are almost eternal.

Emily Dickinson declared, 'If I can stop one heart from breaking...If I can ease one life the aching...I shall not live in vain.' We are here for a reason, let's find it and enjoy it. In the game of life, the spectator's seat is not good enough, we must play our parts. Whoopi Goldberg expressed her hope on this: 'When you are kind to someone in trouble, you hope they'll remember and be kind to someone else. And it'll become like a wildfire.'

**Selflessness.** How beautiful this world would be if everyone were selfless; but selfishness has made society ugly, and greed has made people hungry. William Gladstone lamented, 'Selfishness is the greatest curse of the human race.' It hampers us from pursuing useful and charitable goals and keeps others from reaching theirs too. In contrast, selflessness brings self-denial and altruism. Let us now give in a way that would continue to benefit others long after we are gone. That reminds me of an old Indian saying. 'When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life in such a manner that when you die the world cries and you rejoice.'

**Your divine obligation.** Thousands of near-death experiences (NDE) reported world-wide over the years described supernatural encounters with a powerful Being of Light who emitted the purest form of love, peace and understanding. The experience also included reviews of the subjects' past lives and a question along the line of 'What have you done with your life and for your fellowmen?' We don't know when we will die, we give ourselves peace of mind if we do every act of life as if it were our last. Albert Schweitzer stated, 'A man is ethical only when life, as such, is sacred to him... and when he devotes himself helpfully to all life that is in need of help.' Nowadays, too many of us stand up for our rights and too few stand up for our duties. When all is said and done in this world, there is more said than done!

It is sad we have not obeyed our conscience. Lack of care for others brought

a situation where half the world doesn't know how the other half lives. There is much to explore and learn, much fascination awaiting us. What a boring earth this would be if we came and did nothing! Life is short, the world has abundant opportunities, why do we solve problems with violence? Why don't we evolve and enlarge that joy of helping others? Let's fall back on our psyche and concur with French writer A. Camus, who stated: 'I know only of one duty, and that is to love.' James Lowell noted, 'Every man feels instinctively that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action.'

**Being dutiful to others is a part of true success, riches and greatness.**

The great prophet Mohammed asserted, 'A person's true wealth is the good he or she does in the world.' R. W. Emerson observed, 'The greatest men in all ages have been lovers of their kind. All true leaders of men have it. Faith in men and regard for men are unfailing marks of true greatness.' He added, 'To share often and much...to know even one life has breathe easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.'

Many of us are well above the poverty line, past that mark, it is time to give. Bernie Tapie agreed, 'Lack of money is a cruel deprivation, while, past a certain point, an excess of money means nothing.' The luxury of doing good outshines many other personal enjoyment. In this world of ups and downs, our best motto should be: Have charity in another's trouble, and courage in our own. When we are old and grey, we will look back on our lives and recognise that the moments when we have really lived are those when we did things in the spirit of love. Dr Maxwell Maltz concluded, 'To contribute to life is to contribute to immortality.'

Let us leave this chapter with the touching words of St Francis of Assisi, and make them the mission statement for our existence: 'Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.'

## Chapter 99 Eternal Life.

Today, try and stare right into the centre of the sun; do it for just a few seconds before you blind your eyes. Ponder the magic that keeps it flaring forever, at millions of degrees centigrade. Consider the billions of stars in the universe, many bigger, brighter and farther than this sun. Scientists estimate that the span of the universe observable from a telescope alone is approximately 2 billion light years or 19 trillion kilometres! I am lost for words.

Contemplate the immense and immeasurable power of our Creator... Think, how much you would gain or lose, to adore or ignore such a supreme and omnipotent Being... We must be out of our minds to turn our backs to Him, as we often did.

Only an infinitely powerful and just Being can master such a vast and limitless universe. He is too far beyond human description or imagination. He is more than life and more than death. With such boundless mastery, I am sure God has a grand plan for all of us. All things conceivable and inconceivable are possible with Him. If you were in his shoes, wouldn't you plan a super celebration and a perfect heaven for your children after their rough and tough time on earth? He would not will anything less than felicity and infinity. In such a gigantic universe, It is highly unlikely that He would allow humans to just age, wither and die with no afterlife. Hence, we believe in eternal life.

It is a fact of science that our universe consists of matter and energy which cannot be destroyed but are converted from one form to another. Note how water or metal can turn from solid state to liquid and gaseous states! Likewise our bodies will change from physical to spiritual soul-like states, which cannot be effaced, but will live on forever. This I know in the privacy of my soul and through my personal experience.

My parents died 4 years ago within 48 hours of each other. Obviously, they wanted companionship in the after-life. Since then, my wife and I have had several dreams of them, which were greetings and messages from the other world. We have never doubted my parents' spiritual aliveness. I know that they still exist and they live perpetually. I never had a shadow of a doubt about the truth of life after death.

As we realise the shortness of our stay on earth, we tend to appreciate life. Meanwhile a view of a life beyond this helps us to face calmly our greatest threat - death. We take this as a passage to something bigger, a transition in the whole universal process. We are assured of our immortality. We draw strength from this certainty. As we free ourselves from the fear of death we release our energy in celebrating life.

We all long for immortality; our instinct tells us it is there. In the first chapter, I stated that God wants us to discover and love Him out of our own initiative and freewill. All our efforts, to find a way out of our worldly trials and troubles, and to reach a flawless finale to our existence will never be pleasant and meaningful, until we turn lovingly and adoringly towards our Creator.

Robert Schuller noted in his great book *The Be-Happy Attitudes*, that happiness is 'the beautiful belief that this life, no matter how difficult it may be, is not your final destination.' Let's pause to smell the flowers and savour the passing hours, while we fill ourselves with virtues and grace for that eternal life.

Thousands of short-death and near death experiences (NDE) reported around the world has given us a preview of life after death. These NDE were recounted by people who died clinically but revived later. Amazingly, they all had similar encounters: Seeing their bodies below as they floated weightlessly, going through a tunnel at great speed into the presence of deceased relatives, and a supreme Being of Light that radiated immense love and joy. Most were reluctant to return, but came back with a changed outlook that placed the greatest importance on **love** and **knowledge**, instead of status and materialism. Suicidal NDEs, on the other hand, reported frightful spells in a hell-like setting.

Medical experts found it hard to disclaim NDEs as hallucinations due to the authentic accounts given, aided by the following facts: Generally there were little or no electrical activity in the dead or dying brain to support hallucination. Subjects could recall words spoken by people at the hospital where they died. They met deceased relatives before they had information of their death. They could 'fly' and recognise another relative elsewhere, whose whereabouts were later verified. Candidates also included innocent children who were too young to fabricated such vivid, technical details of their life-saving operations in the hospitals. Dr Raymond Moody, K. Ring, J. Randles & P. Hough, and many others have published interesting books on their findings. Please read them.

Death experiences established the importance of loving and giving to others. Those who suffer, make peace and enrich others will be rewarded; those who plunder and murder, rob and rape will be punished. Even without this pre-experience of death, the concept of reward and retribution makes complete sense. There is so much unfairness and wrongdoing in the world that there must be a compensating and levelling system in this perfect cosmic system; besides, we all have the God-given conscience to refrain from evil. We can feel it, and we know we should not steal or kill and that we should earn our place in eternal life.

Indeed, all we need and all that God wants in His endless universe are **love** and **knowledge**. Love between His children, and knowledge and admiration of His fascinating cosmos. Before we reach the eternal life beyond, the quest for knowledge and the growth of our intellect are great adventures and discoveries on this planet. There is a lot after this life; there is a lot in this one too!

My concluding words are: Prepare for eternal life, you are going to spend much time there, in eternity. The exciting thought is that: After death we will be reunited with everybody again, especially with our loved ones. Heaven will be a place of sheer beauty, complete bliss, total content, endless comfort, and everlasting love.

“Live as if everything you do will eventually be known.” - Hugh Prather.

“I love you, my brother, whoever you are - whether you worship in your church, kneel in your temple, or pray in your mosque. You and I are all children of one faith, ... of one supreme being...” - Gibran

“For Life is Eternal, Love is immortal, Death is only a horizon and a horizon is nothing but the limit of our earthly vision.” - Helen Rice.

## Chapter 100 True Riches.

When I was a child, my buddies and I had great fun playing with bottle caps, rubber bands and tree seeds. Our delights were no less than those enjoyed by modern kids with costly and sophisticated toy-machines. Well-being is not measured merely by the amount of money involved, neither are our true riches. Ours is a world of paradox; we have billionaires among beggars, pleasure and pain, progress but pollution, development yet destruction. Wealth does not guarantee welfare, materialism has brought false promise of well-being. A new outlook seems to be emerging, towards more spirituality and less materialism.

**Money provides only a part of happiness.** Unless you have something more than just money, you are still incomplete; you only live more conveniently. Gene Perret pondered: 'When you get right down to it, rich people are just poor people with money.' Many questing for success are going for profits and perks, possessions and power. Life is more than that. Let's not miss out on many other things. George Lorimer reminded us, 'It's good to have money and the things that money can buy, but it's good, too, to check up...and make sure that you have not lost the thing that money can't buy.' If you are self-centred in a narrow sphere of existence, and your fortunes are used for greedy and selfish ends, you end up having money without meaning, and prosperity with no purpose. If you want to receive, you should have much to give too. If you choose only to get, you won't be getting for long! Another sobering fact is that once a person is rich, additional wealth only provides marginal satisfaction. The second million are not as thrilling as the first. Continued pleasure wears off. As we grow older, wealthier and wiser, we progressively find that money is not the most important thing in the world. After all, how much can we eat in a day?

**Some of the nicest things are free.** There are many good but inexpensive things in life: Fresh air, morning breeze, wild flowers, bird songs, beaches, sunset, starlight and laughter. Sometimes, a flower smells as good as expensive perfume, and a ride on a bicycle is as enjoyable as one in a Rolls-Royce. Many have forgotten to relish those simpler and natural riches, to surrender totally to those magical minutes as they click away. Let us slow down to absorb richly each of those precious moments.

**Happiness is a manner of travelling, not the destination.** Experts say there is more satisfaction in wanting what you have, than in getting what you want! True happiness comes more from striving to fulfil desires, than in final attainment. Reaching goals gradually is more satisfying than a sudden sweep or big windfall. Life should be an enchanting journey with little daily victories, wonderful surprises, thrilling adventures, endless discoveries and personal fulfilment. Remarkably, this expedition is never-ending; our destination changes as we progress along. The more we achieve the more possibilities we see in a widening horizon!

**Money should serve a great purpose.** Money, mansions, fame and fortune are not the be-alls and end-alls of personal happiness. It becomes a blessing when it enriches not just our own lives but those of others, producing better livelihood and greater well-being for all. It is useless, or at best neutral, if it doesn't bring satisfaction beyond the lone individual. Wealth can heighten or lessen happiness, it can be a blight or blessing, a comfort or a curse, depending on the values and wisdom of the one using it.

**You are more important than your possessions.** Inner development is as important as outside adventure. Many overlook this; they are too distracted by the world around them. To become prosper

ous in dollar terms is one thing, but to be wealthy in all the great riches of life is something else! You can have cash without goals, contentment, peace of mind, and the joy of fulfilment and contribution. Much depends on the developments in yourself.

**Self Development.** Tom Morris, in his great book '*True Success*', noted that we look around this great world and we tend to become 'so fascinated by the things we see that we forget to develop who we are.' He believed that in pursuing goals we must expand our minds and deploy our talents for all. Charles Schultz affirmed this, 'Life is like a ten-speed bike. Most of us have gears we never use.'

**The quality of each experience is important.** Success and happiness do not rely on our possession, but rather on how we capitalise on them, and how we feel in each circumstance. Much depends on our ability to capture the enjoyment of whatever is here and now - the only time in which we actually live. Clinch the present, not the past or future. Savour the richness and fullness of each passing moment. You can enlarge the pleasure of each little experience by lingering on it -

the sip of sweet liqueur, the delicious taste of a lobster, the sprinkle of warm shower, the crispiness of the clean pillow and bed-sheet... It is what we cherish not what we have, that makes us rich. A full life is not so much how long but how well we live. The key is to make everyday and everything most harmonious and gratifying. Even the smallest items can make the biggest difference or impact. These things mean a lot, especially if you add joy, beauty and value to everyone's life. An existence where money only brings anxiety, insecurity, selfishness, greed, family tussles, excessive drinking, gambling and laziness is a lifestyle of trash riches, not true riches.

**True Riches.** It is best to be wealthy in all the treasures of life which bring fulfilment. We should aim for real blessings: Health, love, knowledge, wisdom, peace and full utilisation of our resources for the welfare of ourselves and humanity. U.S. President Thomas Jefferson reflected on this, 'Our greatest happiness...does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed us, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation and freedom in all just pursuits.' Oscar Wilde pointed out, 'Ordinary riches can be stolen from a man. Real riches cannot. In the treasury house of your soul, there are infinitely precious things that may not be taken from you.' True riches are as follows:

**1. The discovery and appreciation of all the beauties, wonders and treasures on earth.** Make delightful findings everywhere, enjoy the sciences, arts, literature and culture, relish the charm and fascination in nature. Lie on the cool grass and admire the autumn leaves and soaring birds, play in the park, wade in the creek, whistle in the woods, saunter near the sea, sing under the stars, every chance you get.

**2. A life full of moral values, high ideals, hope and dreams and fulfilling them.** Platonius declared, 'If I keep my good character, I shall be rich enough.' A forward-looking nature, overflowing with aspirations is great. Keep looking ahead and moving on. There are still dreams to build, many good books to read, new songs to sing, sights to see, friends to meet; still many places to explore and many treasures to find and keep.

**3. Harmony and richness in human relationship.** These include economic security, beautiful friendship, fabulous family life, and the bringing up of splendid and successful children. B. A. Stanley stated. 'He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much.'



**4. A positive mental attitude, with excellent physical, mental and spiritual health.** This nature or state is priceless and brings self-esteem, confidence, optimism, enthusiasm, creativity, competence and achievement.

**5. The choice of a cause bigger than you are.** Work at it with all your heart and soul. You cannot be truly happy if you only live a life within yourself. Marden sighed on this, ‘Half the world is adrift, without aim or purpose, living an unplanned hand-to-mouth existence.’

**6. Freedom.** Under God’s blessing, you are born free, to do what you want. Stay free from restrictions, discontent, stress, doubts and fears. Enjoy this liberty, command your pursuits and control your destiny. Live with abandon, and relax. Hug and kiss your loved ones. Savour the food, music and scenery. Enjoy the bounty given by nature, commerce, science and technology.

**7. Work, engrossment, accomplishments and rewards.** Research has shown these as sources of great satisfaction for people. M. Csikszentmihalyi stated, ‘Happiness comes from experiences in which one’s mental and emotional energies are invested.’ We all need a few luxuries to be happy, but it is important to have variety, breadth, height and depth in our lives, and these include: Loving one’s livelihood and pursuits with vitality and enthusiasm; getting engrossed; giving excellent performance; then relishing everything from dances to drama, antiques to architecture, painting to poetry, hobbies to holidays. G. Gschwandtner said: ‘The meaning in life is to find value in what we do.’ Bishop Cumberland however, coaxed us to go the extra mile: ‘Better to wear out than to rust out.’

**8. A life full of love, virtues and excellence.** Jonathan Swift exclaimed: ‘I am in love with the world.’ Follow him, and listen to Emmett Fox who advised us, ‘If you could only loved enough, you could be the most powerful person in the world.’ Loving, giving and getting reciprocated adds to your riches, as Oscar Wilde noted, ‘Who, being loved is poor?’ Speak kindly and do charitable things, secretly! In life, the outstanding minority shine and win, they give the best to the world and receive the best in return. With your love for your fellowmen, love God and obey his commandments. Have faith in yourself, in God and in the eternal life with Him.

**9. Knowledge, skills, wisdom, and balance.** I cannot conceive of true riches being enjoyed by an illiterate who neither reads nor writes. He misses out too much! A. Schopenhauer noted, ‘Ignorance is degrading when found in the

company with riches.’ Knowledge is power, and likewise, skills are permanent gold mines and money-spinners. Wisdom is the perpetual guide and protector. Balance brings profound well-being.

**10. The fullest use and enjoyment of your inner and external resources.**

These include all the provisions of this universe, which are shared with others, thereby benefiting yourself and society. Success is measured by how far you have gone with your given talents and calibre. What really matters is what you do with what you have. You must exploit all your powers and potential to enrich yourself, and to contribute to humankind.

The man with true riches can say: I’ve used all my talents, abilities and wealth to bring good to myself, my family and the world. As for myself, I have found my true riches. The pleasure derived from writing this Book is overflowing. Now I have friends everywhere! I have taught all of you many things. I have influenced many lives. I have touched the future!

Let us conclude with a brilliant paragraph from Emerson, ‘To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; ... to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, ... to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.’ Go ahead, you, and all the youths of the world, may God bless you. Go on to dream and accomplish greater dreams! Always believe you can do it, then you can be, do and have anything and everything you have ever dreamed of. Awaken the giant inside you. Be a champion, a star of the greatest magnitude in talents, calibre, will-power and performance. Help to build a world that enhances human well-being. Make your love a miracle, your work a marvel, your contribution a masterpiece and your life a monument.

## **The Author**

This book is the fruit of years of deep reflection and a man's love for children and literature. The author has also read thousands of books in the last 30 years. Following his graduation in Canada in Economics and Psychology, he has accumulated 30 over years of management and marketing experience, and was a member of the British, Malaysian and New Zealand Institutes of Management. He has to date visited 26 countries.

The author and his family reside in New Zealand. He has fulfilled some management contracts in Malaysia pver the years, hence the many letters to his children, from which part of the book is derived. His ultimate goal is the set up of a charitable foundation, for poor and underprivileged children.



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