

Small things make a big difference

Kamran Rizvi

**GO
FOR
IT!**



GO FOR IT!

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*This simple book is dedicated to my parents,
whose continuing care, guidance and support
has made a huge difference in my life.*

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	01
Preface.....	02
Introduction.....	07
Chapter 1: Life.....	09
Chapter 2: TAO.....	12
Chapter 3: Think Your Own Thoughts.....	16
Chapter 4: “You Are the Problem!”.....	18
Chapter 5: The Essence.....	21
Chapter 6: Small Steps.....	25
Epilogue.....	33
Paint your future.....	35
Articles by the author.....	58

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01

Preface

Life reveals itself progressively as we gradually expand our consciousness over the years. With each new learning and awareness, through reading or observation, we are born again. We start seeing more and we view things differently, every time we encounter what is new to us.

I remember sitting in my pajamas on my bedroom floor one evening in London. I was 15 then. My dad entered the room, greeted me and asked, “What do you want to become in the future, son?” I remember telling him, “Something!” to which he said,

“Beta (son)... 'Something' means nothing... it's too vague. Be specific when setting your direction in life. It may take you years, so don't worry. Aim to have a clear vision for yourself. Only then will you live a life you truly want.” These thoughts have stayed with me to this day.

You will not be amazed to find that everyone wants to be successful. Yet, when you ask them what it means to them, they put forward generalizations like, “being famous”, “being rich”, “being powerful”, “achieving goals” and so on. When you pose the question 'why?' the fun starts, as you see the look of mild shock in their faces.

02

It should come to you as no surprise that most of us suffer from the sublime bliss of ignorance. We know of things around us, but we are mostly oblivious of what's there within us!

My life changed for the better when I started believing in things uncommon. For example, here is a fictional dialogue I have had with people over the years which sums up several interactions:

Q: What is your permanent address?

A: Excuse me! Permanent? Nothing is, at least on this planet! I suppose it would have to be heaven. As for my current address, it is...

03 Q: Where do you live?

A: Where I am!! Where else could I possibly live?

Q: Who do you work for?

A: Myself! I work for my goals at XXXX

Q: Who is the most important person in your life?

A: The person or people I am with at any given time! How else could I be sincere to my relationships? Right now, I am totally with you, body, mind and soul – 100%! Its only when I am all by myself, that I think of those close to me, like my wife, my children, my parents, my siblings and my friends and colleagues.

Knowledge can be life changing, but only if it changes your view of the world. This could be for better or for worse. Since arriving in Pakistan in June of 1991, I have felt as though I have entered heaven on earth. This may seem strange to you, as I was in London for the previous twenty years of my life.

I had a good life in London with all the worldly comforts you can imagine, a stable job; a cool salary with perks; and with growth prospects in my banking career. My two kids were going to some of the best private schools. I was part of a joint family, living in the heart of London, right next door to the Royal Albert Hall.

There was always a lot to do with my parents, siblings and friends, in my free time. At the time, I was working as a branch manager in the west end of London in an international bank which had offices in 72 countries. The bank had fourteen thousand employees, made up of 98 different nationalities. It was the 7th largest private bank in the world and one of the fastest growing. I was on the fast track and could look ahead to an attractive career in international banking. As a manager in such an amazing organization with combined assets of over \$50 billion (1988/89), I felt tall, knowing that I had access to all the key decision-makers in banks' global operations.

Now, back in Pakistan, having resigned from the bank a year earlier, I had nothing to my name other


than my knowledge, skills, attitude and of course my dreams...but very abstract at the time.

I discovered that I was pretty egalitarian in my views and enjoyed the simple things in life.

I was pained by the disparity in incomes and opportunities for people in this part of the world. I just could not stand the idea of elitism and the class-divide. Somehow, I was drawn to Pakistan as I was born here. There was much to be done. I started feeling that I could be useful and finally live on my purpose which became clearer in the ensuing months.

05 Everyone can make a contribution in a myriad ways. Some become doctors, others engineers, accountants, lawyers or politicians. Some choose to tackle poverty, while others attend to other sectors in development or emergency relief. I chose to become a trainer and teacher to impart whatever I had learned from life till then. What I knew had worked for me and for many others who had achieved the kind of life they were looking for.

It is not for me to say what people should aspire to, that's solely their preserve. My only interest is to bring greater awareness to people of their infinite potential and that they could get what they wanted out of life, if only they knew how!



Q: When everything was so perfect in London, why did you come back to Pakistan?

Ans: I was in the UK for all practical and material considerations, but all this while my heart remained here. Maybe this was because I started my life here. This is where I belong and perhaps that's why my soul yearned for my return. I love to travel and have already lived in Switzerland, UK and Canada. But nothing compares to being back to my place of origin on earth.

Introduction

Whether you are young or old; male or female; student or a teacher; married or single; a professional or an entrepreneur; a social worker or an artist; a civil servant or a soldier; an athlete or a musician; a scientist or a philosopher; a politician or a civil society activist; a theologian or an inventor; regardless of your economic, social or cultural circumstance; regardless of your vocation; if you can read this book; this book is for you. **You are alive!**



07

This book is about making a difference, and you can make a big one. However, this fact will remain a cliché, unless you take practical steps to make the small changes you need to make in the way you think and see things, starting now!

No matter how well you are doing in your life at present, there is always room for improvement. Everyone needs to improve daily by making his/her every 'today' better than his/her 'yesterday'. If this is not the case with you, **check your pulse, you may be dead.**



This is a simple book about life and how you can make it better for yourself and your loved ones – those with whom you enjoy trusting relationships. They may include members of your family (immediate and extended), your colleagues, your friends, your neighbors and all others who matter in your life.

You can achieve nothing alone. You need strong and healthy relationships to make things happen in your personal and professional life. Quality of your relationships determines the level of satisfaction and fulfillment you achieve each day.

08

Chapter 1

LIFE

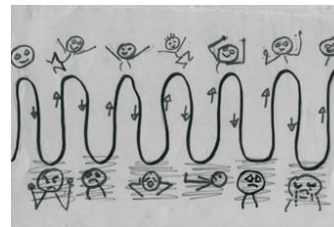
The few concepts, ideas and principles I am sharing here are my beliefs and convictions based on what I have observed and experienced. I have learned from a variety of sources. These include my personal reflections on events in my life, real life stories of people who have succeeded and failed¹, inspiring works of fiction and non-fiction by authors from the east and west, thousands of group and one-on-one interactions with people, young and old, from a variety of social, economic and cultural backgrounds.

09

Life is what you make it. People are essentially the same deep down, regardless of their culture and background. At one point or another, everyone feels happy or sad, angry or calm, confused or clear. However, the difference between us comes from how we respond to different stimuli, for example, what will make you laugh, may cause another to cry; what excites you, may depress another, and so on. Being more aware of yourself and others therefore becomes crucial in managing your relationship with yourself and others. Relationships are the main cause of our joys or sorrows, health or illness, respect or disgrace. All of us have experienced this at one time or another. While we seek joy, health and regard in our lives, nature has its way of introducing to us moments of grief, sickness and embarrassment.

¹ Success and failure are subjective terms. Different people define these in their own terms. In this book I will be sharing my perspectives.

The interesting fact is that unless you experience the '**downs**', you will not be able to appreciate the value of the '**ups**'. The highs and lows we go through are part of the tapestry of our life.



Without doubt, life is a big and complex subject. To understand life is to understand the universe and all that it contains. I cannot even begin to talk about the immensity of life. However, what I am aiming to share about life are the basic paradigm-shifting essentials.

10

Consider this: Behind all the apparently simple everyday things we enjoy daily, like the smart phones, iPads, air travel, automobiles, electricity, waste management, healthcare, and so much else, there is a whole load of research and science working behind them. Yet the complexity behind all things apparently simple, user-friendly and beautiful doesn't stop us from benefiting from them. Similarly, you can benefit from life without even having detailed knowledge of how your body and mind work, let alone how your spirit or soul work through you!

Q: So what will you be talking about, regarding life?

Ans: Life is a huge subject and volumes could be written on it. My aim in this book, is simply to ignite the journey of self-discovery in my readers and focus their attention on the importance of taking responsibility for improving themselves and helping those they care for, along the way.

This modest publication is just a start. I plan on writing more books that build on the concepts presented here and also explore new ground, in the coming years.

Chapter 2

TAO

The simple approach I have taken in this book is called: 'TAO' (Thoughts, Actions and Outcomes). TAO is a conceptual tool that will help you look at your life differently. By so doing, you will be able to confidently chart your journey into the future – a future that you desire and feel excited about.

Ask yourself, are you really living the life of your dreams? Or do you find yourself constrained by family and societal pressures? Are you doing things just to manage your day-to-day commitments to yourself and to your family? Are you ignoring **your inner voice**

which wants you to pursue an entirely different path that will give you peace of mind and contentment? If your answer is yes, to all or some of these questions, then I am happy you have taken this book in your hand. What you will find in the chapters that follow, may not give you all the answers you seek, but will certainly confuse you, and this is a good place to start, particularly when it comes to learning and growing. From confusion comes clarity, just like light comes from darkness.



The good news is that it is never too late! Whether

you are in your 70s or have just turned eighteen... you can be the person you have always dreamed of becoming.

Our thoughts lead to actions we take. What we do, and how we perform an act, in turn determines the outcomes we get in our lives. To start with, this is the simple logic that we will explore.

Your thoughts make you who you are. They are invisible and intangible. Yet, it is our thinking that provides tangible and visible results, desired or unexpected, that we get in our life e.g., a raise in pay; a good deal in a house purchase; lousy grades in college exams; a troubled marriage; a gold medal in the Olympics; promotion to the next level; a life of your choice and so on. Therefore, consider changing your thoughts to enjoy a better life or to recover from a setback. You need to look no further. You can do this by **communicating with yourself** and also by having meaningful conversations with others, particularly with those, whom you regard highly - preferably people who have views on life that are different from yours. In doing so, you will broaden your vision and understanding by seeing the world from a variety of perspectives.

What is a person without his thoughts? Nothing!



Other than your physical appearance, what differentiates you from another? Not much. However, it is thoughts which set people apart.

If you stand still and express nothing, how could anyone make out who you are and what you stand for? How could you survive without relating to others? You need to communicate verbally and non-verbally in order to engage with yourself, with others and with your world. It is your relationships in all these dimensions that determine the quality of your life. What is of essence, however, is your relationship with yourself!

Your physical self has limits, for example, you won't grow any taller than x feet; your waistline may expand or contract through your efforts, but by how much? You may be able to lift a 25kgs suitcase with some difficulty, but try lifting a carton weighing 200kgs! This is not the case with your mind. Your intellectual self is boundless. Your only limit is what you can imagine. What can't you imagine? Go wild. Imagine whatever you will. **Your future is a blank canvas,** draw on it whatever you like. I can see you wandering off in all sorts of directions in your mind... At this very



moment, you might be imagining driving your car, say a Corolla, to work. You suddenly decide to take off and head straight for the moon; or better still, you see yourself as having eliminated poverty, improved world literacy rate to 100% and having

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found a cure to all the diseases that plague humanity, including AIDS! Idealistic? But that's ok! You have just enjoyed your capacity to fantasize.

On a more serious note, sincerely imagine a future you deeply care for and passionately desire; take personal responsibility for making it happen; put a timeline to it; announce your vision to the world; and be willing to be held accountable for the outcomes you produce. This is the beginning of your journey to making your life better.

To imagine your future state with sincerity, with responsibility and by allowing sufficient time for the desired results to manifest in your life, takes confidence. You can expand your thoughts by first developing your confidence. This comes when you start believing in yourself and in your infinite potential.

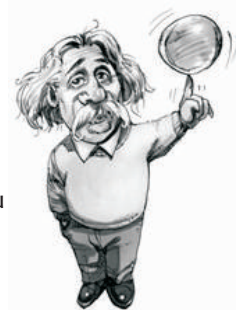
You can make a **big difference**, but this fact will remain a cliché, unless you take practical steps to make the **small changes** in your thinking, starting now!



Chapter 3

Think Your Own Thoughts

Own what you say. **Albert Einstein** is known to have said that **imagination is more powerful than knowledge**. What do you think? I believe he is right, and I have my own reasons for holding this view. You must develop and have your own beliefs on this and any other ideas you come across. It makes a huge difference when you own what you say, rather than merely sharing impressive quotes and verses from well known figures.



When we speak of thoughts, we are talking about our values, beliefs, knowledge (formal and informal), paradigms, perceptions, intent and so much else. It's easy to get bogged down in so much detail. Please don't, at least not yet.

Change your beliefs. Here is a saying that will help you see and feel what I mean, "To discover new oceans, you must first lose sight of the shores." There was a time, about five hundred or so years ago, when it was believed that the world is flat. For sailors of that era, this meant that they would

keep the shore in view as they sailed the oceans. They believed that if they went too far out and lost sight of the shore, they might drift into the unknown and maybe fall over the edge of their flat earth! This strongly held notion (belief, paradigm or perception) sounds ridiculous today, but it took Christopher Columbus over seven years to convince only a few people that our world was actually round. Message: Change your beliefs, to change your life! You see your world, not as it is, but as you are. This is the key.

Chapter 4

“You Are the Problem!”

Beliefs are very powerful. So be careful about what you believe in and why. Your beliefs are formed based on your experiences. If something didn't work in the past, you are more likely not to try that same thing again, because of your past experience. For instance, you visit a convenience store near your home at 7am in the morning and find it closed. You do this a couple of times and find the same result. You give up trying. Instead, you choose to go through the trouble of traveling to a store thirty minutes away! Here is a live example, I met an entrepreneur once and during my conversation, asked him, “Do you have a dream for how your business will be in a decade or so from now?” He replied with a smile, “Of course I have!” I followed up instantly, “How many people are with you in this dream?” He said, “Hmmm... no one, and this happens to be the problem. Thanks for helping me realize this.” I was puzzled, pointed to the people working in his business, “Are you saying that these people are not part of what you are creating?!” “Sadly, no; they are not.” “Why is this so?” I queried. He thought for a moment and explained, “I don't trust any of them... You see, whenever I have relied on people, and have opened myself up to them, sooner or later, they have let me down. My goodwill has been abused far too many times. As a result, I don't see any value of trusting people anymore.” Imagine the stress this young

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entrepreneur was under. He wanted me to help him identify the problem and suggest a solution. My answer was simple, **“You are the problem!** You don't have to look any further.”



When you experience setbacks a few times, the phrase, 'once bitten, twice shy,' comes into play. To do the same old thing, over and over again, and expect different results, is sheer madness. For instance, if your car gets stuck in mud by the roadside, you will at first use force, by putting your car in first gear and stepping on the accelerator. You may succeed in the first attempt or make the situation worse. Should latter be the case, and you persist in revving the engine and get all worked up, things will only get worse for you. Instead, it would be wiser for you to stop whatever you are doing; scratch your head; and think of alternatives; and sure enough, ideas will come to your mind and one of them will work! Thankfully, most people get wise when it comes to getting their car out of a quagmire. Sadly this is not often the case when it comes to relationships, whether at work or at home.

Here is what I have heard expressed by managers very frequently, “I have told my shift engineer thousands of times, not to do this. Yet he persists! What's wrong with him!?” Can you see the signs of madness here? Or consider what some parents say about their children, “My daughter loves being

“You Are the Problem!”

out with her friends. She gives no time to her studies or to her responsibilities at home. Kids are impossible these days. These mobile phones and **social networking sites** are a curse. My children just refuse to listen to me anymore. I have tried telling them how to be responsible so many times, but they just don't pay heed. What do I do?!” What do you make of such problems? Do you think that you too may be stuck in such a self-created mess? When you don't get what you want, it is futile to look elsewhere for solutions. It is not others, but you who needs to change. And what you need to alter is simply your own concepts and perceptions.



Chapter 5

The Essence

You can change your concepts and perceptions through having meaningful conversations with people, and re-interpreting your observations and experiences in ways that serve your interest. But before you do that, there is something that you need to realize. And that is, prepare yourself:

1. **YOU** have the power to interpret any reality to your advantage, and
2. **YOU** have the power to express what you want others to see

- 21 The two significant points I have shared above are not to be taken lightly. In them you will find potent ways with which to **transform your life.**



Let's look at the first one, 'You have the power to interpret any reality to your advantage'. You must be asking how? Install this belief: 'There is no bad news'. I can hear you say, 'But hold on a minute. This is not a feasible idea. There are plenty of examples of bad news everywhere. What about the victims of the 2005 earthquake? What about the young couple who died in a road accident, through no fault of their own? What about the billions who live below the poverty line and suffer each day? What about Pakistan losing a crucial ODI² due to unfair

²One Day International cricket

umpiring? You may have thought of other instances to counter my assertion that there is no bad news.

Are you open to changing your concepts and perceptions in order to gain from this phrase 'There is no bad news?' Please continue reading, but with the intent of understanding what I am saying. Resist the temptation to judge. You are not obliged to agree with my point of view on anything.

Let me share some thoughts that most of you can relate to. **Our future is uncertain.** The world is changing so fast technologically, that it is becoming harder to predict what will happen in the next few months, let alone the next five years or beyond. This is true. But instead of getting stressed out on account of the tentative nature of our future, why not focus on the one thing that is certain, and yet we ignore at our own peril? DEATH. It is certain that death will come to us. However, when will death come to us? Your guess is as good as mine. Death is both certain and uncertain.



Talking about death may seem morbid to you. But hold on. Your conscious awareness of this certainty and uncertainty, will teach you how to live a fulfilled life of no regrets. Have you heard this phrase, 'Live each day as though it were your last'? This idea comes from understanding that we

are mortal beings, but with the capacity to be immortal. For instance, through your deeds today, you can leave an enduring impact on this planet that resonates through time.

Look at all the conveniences we enjoy that were non-existent a few decades and centuries ago, namely, electricity, air-conditioning, transportation and communications and advances in the field of health, education, good governance and so much else. We owe our thanks to the thousands of explorers, inventors and thinkers amongst our ancestors who have made it possible for us to enjoy the life as we do today. Their legacy lives through time. Ours will do likewise, if we do today, what we must. Not to heed this fact, would be bad news of our own creation.

23

Therefore, when you interpret things to your advantage, even death becomes a teacher and a guide for life. It helps you to focus on your immediate priorities and encourages you to act in a responsible way, every hour, every day.

Now let's turn to the second fact, which is "You have the power to express what you want others to see". Building strong and trusting relationships is at the heart of enduring success, which I define as enjoying health, respect and happiness in life. This is only possible when in all your dealings with people, whether in family, at work, or in your community, your intent is to be fair to them and that you also care for their betterment. In this

context, it helps to know that you have the power to express what you want others to see. Just meaning well for others is not enough. You need to effectively communicate how you feel in a way that others can see what you mean. And this power to engage others is what we all have. It just needs to be discovered, developed and utilized intelligently and with wisdom.

24

Chapter 6

Small Steps

The way to check your current beliefs for their validity is to **keep an open mind**, and not discount possibilities hastily, as they may exist and you miss them. Blind adherence to a belief is dogma. Dogma is a sign of a shut mind that limits your courses of actions that could lead you to a desired outcome.



How can you strengthen and expand your thoughts to achieve greater ends in life? By continuously improving in the following six small things you can do every day!

25

1. Reading (input)
2. Writing (output)
3. Listening (input)
4. Speaking (output)
5. Observing (input)
6. Behaving (output)

Your inputs and outputs are processed by your mind. The more deliberately you act on each of these six keys for self-improvement, the more efficient and effective you will become in everything you do.

There is no limit to how much you can improve in each of these elements on a daily basis. You can

track the improvements you make in each of these abilities. They can be measured. **Barack Obama** got to where he is today using these same capacities that you also have and use every day. Become more conscious of your behavior and its impact on others. What is the difference between his achievements and yours? Huge! However, the idea is not to suggest that the scale of your achievement matters, it is its significance.



Greatness is your destiny. To me, greatness is doing what you want to do, knowing that you could have done anything else that you had put your mind to.

Let's examine one of these skills briefly:

26

Reading

You become **the company you keep!** Therefore, to bring a significant change in your life, you will need to change some of your relationships that surround you. The kind of company you are enjoying these days indicates the kind of person you are. Therefore, you will need to step out of your comfort zone and choose the company of people whom you admire for their achievements and vision. Other than meeting people in social gatherings, and networking in conferences and seminars, reading



books is your opportunity to relate to great people – dead or alive! Their thoughts and beliefs are captured in print for posterity. You can enrich your thinking by choosing to read biographies of people; their essays; and their perspectives. You will gain far more from books, than by just meeting people who are alive today. Libraries and bookshops are packed with knowledge and wisdom of the ages. For example, what is history, if not a chronicle of lives of larger than life personalities; the mistakes they made, and the difference they made to the world in which we live today? You can enrich yourself from history by learning what other people did, and the outcomes they achieved through their actions. Learn from other people's mistakes, while also taking lessons from the mistakes you make!

27

The habit of reading will give you access to great thinkers and philosophers of their time. Make it a habit to contrast your thinking with theirs and evolve your own theory and a newer understanding of what it means to live an exemplary life. Also indulge yourself in works of fiction. Authors express their imaginative capabilities when writing fiction and share their unique perception of reality.



Feast your mind with good books. I once met a friend in a bookshop. I asked him about the kind of books he liked. What he said startled me. "I like to buy a book which I find difficult to understand in

my first reading of a paragraph I select in it randomly!" This unusual approach worked for him and you may wish to give it a try. Challenge your mind.

A family friend invited me to meet their 17 year old son who was not making any progress academically. They were worried for him. His parents were concerned with his lack of self-expression and low self-esteem. He tended to keep his feelings to himself. My dialogue with him one evening at his house will give you an idea of the challenge they and later, I faced:

Me: How are you today beta (son)?

Teenager: Fine.

Me: What are you planning to do this weekend?

Teenager: Not sure.

Me: What do you enjoy doing?

Teenager: Nothing really.

...and such short responses continued for a few minutes. It was like trying to extract blood from stone. He wasn't opening up to me as I had hoped. He was shy and painfully unresponsive. I changed my tack the next time I met him, a few weeks later. This is what happened:

Me: Thanks for making time to see me again.

Teenager: You are welcome.

Me: Do you love your parents?

Teenager: Yes.

Me: Do you care for them?

Teenager: Of course!

28

Me: If I requested you to do something that would make them exceedingly happy, particularly if it is very simple for you, and something which you could do easily for only 30 mins each day, would you do it?

Teenager: Hmmm... Yes... but what do you have in mind?

Me: A book by Leo Tolstoy, titled War & Peace. Here it is. I want you to spend only 30 mins with it each day – and you can choose the time of day when it suits you.

Teenager: What?? Read this fat book??!! I don't like reading!

Me: I fully understand and respect how you feel. I also found such a task daunting when I was your age. But what I am suggesting is not how it appears. You don't have to finish reading all the 800 pages!

Teenager: Really? What do you mean?

Me: All I want you to do is spend 30 mins with this book each day, and read as much as you can in this time, even if it is only one line. Just make sure you fully understand and feel the words and sentences you read, starting from the very beginning. It will help you to keep a dictionary by your side. Look up the words you don't understand and on occasions, even try to see the words you think you know. If for any reason, you are unable to understand any sentence or a paragraph, as you make steady progress, just ask your dad, or call me.

Teenager: This sounds too easy. Are you sure there isn't a catch to it?

Me: Well yes, there is. If I hear that you have spent more than 30 mins with this book on any

particular day, I will be cross with you!

Teenager: [Smiled]

Me: Do we have a deal?!

Teenager: Sure! I'll start this evening!

Me: By the way, would you like to discuss with me the bits you have read on a regular basis – say once a fortnight?

Teenager: Ok!

This young lad made a start. At first, he could barely manage a paragraph in the thirty minutes he had. A month later, he was going through a couple of pages. Each time I met him, he looked more animated and confident and would not stop talking about some of the passages he had enjoyed. Now, almost two years later, he is reading books as a habit and spends at least an hour every day. His verbal and written expression and poise have improved considerably. It's a joy to see him engaged with life! Small things do make a big difference! Just the other day, I learned that India beat Pakistan by three wickets in the Asia Cup being played in Srilanka. It was a closely contested match. India had two balls remaining and needed to score four runs. Their batsmen hit a six in the second last ball of the final over... voila!

As you would have gathered by now, just by developing a reading habit, you will **furnish your mind with ideas**. Through the confidence you gain, the ideas will compel you to act in ways you would have thought impossible before. Its only



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when you try doing different things that you will increase the probability of achieving the outcomes you desire. Your writing will improve; you will listen to people more intently; you will begin to express your point of view with greater clarity and enthusiasm; your ability to observe will heighten; you will start learning from everything you encounter; your body language will communicate poise and you will be on your way to a fulfilling and rewarding life. All this will start happening when you make reading a habit – an hour a day, every day is the minimum I recommend. Make sure that you select books to read that are different from the vocation you are pursuing.

31 Learning is fun. Make it a habit. It helps you to grow in capability and prosper over time. It improves the way you behave and come across to people. You are able to create opportunities out of simple moments of life that you might have ignored previously, and it is those small opportunities found in the simple moments of life that will lead you to make a big difference.



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Small Steps

Q: Are the other 5 steps equally important to or substitutable for reading?

Ans: Each of the six keys to self-improvement are equally important, and can be developed through practice. However, developing your reading habit is the first and most important step. Through regular reading, people expand their vision by engaging with great minds. It also enriches their vocabulary, which leads to better self-expression. Reading stimulates the mind and ideas for self-improvement follow naturally.

32

Go For It!

Epilogue

Do you have more questions now than answers? If yes; brilliant! Questions are the answer!

Ponder on the ideas I have left you with. It is your thoughts and intent that will shape your actions; your actions will most likely lead you to the outcomes you want.

Be prepared for setbacks along the way and remain focused on your goals. You can do this by not falling victim to either fear or apathy.

33 As long as you are true to yourself; as long as you value your relationships; and as long as you take responsibility for your actions, you will increase the probability of achieving results in life that will fulfill you, while inspiring others. By blaming others and yourself, you become your own greatest enemy. Adopt a 'zero blame' philosophy. The power to overcome obstacles lies within you. Believe in your power to be creative and live up to commitments made to yourself and others.

Learning is a cradle to grave activity. If you are not making mistakes, you are not learning and growing.

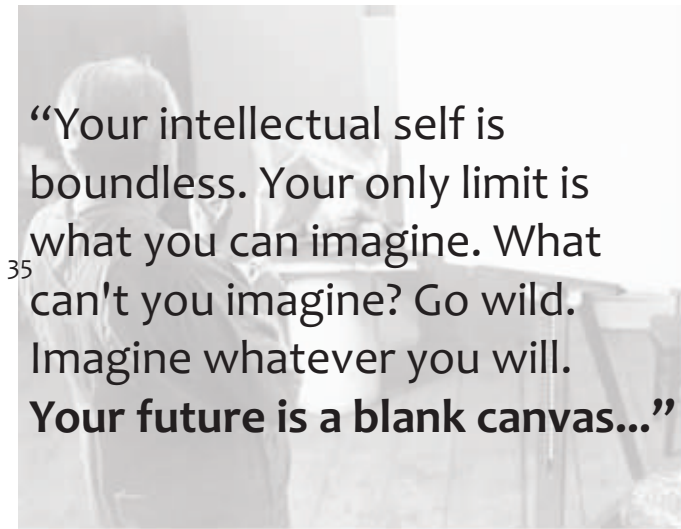
Discover and re-discover your attributes, your aptitude, and your attitude. Assess them periodically. Leverage them to live a life of your dreams.

Go For It!

" The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words ."

Rachel Naomi Remen

34



35 “Your intellectual self is boundless. Your only limit is what you can imagine. What can't you imagine? Go wild. Imagine whatever you will. **Your future is a blank canvas...**”

The following pages will listen to you...



36

Go For It!



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Paint your future



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Go For It!



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Paint your future



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Go For It!



Paint your future



Go For It!



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Paint your future



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Go For It!



Paint your future



Go For It!



Paint your future



Go For It!



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Paint your future



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Go For It!



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Paint your future



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Go For It!



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Paint your future



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Go For It!



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Paint your future



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Having and Using Influence

Influencing is the ability to change the minds and decisions of others without necessarily having formal authority to do so. And this capacity lies at the heart of leadership. The art of influencing and leading can be learned, much like swimming, but not everyone can win the gold in the Olympics! The same applies to leadership and influence.

There are many influential figures in history and in our present times from whom we can gain useful insights. Take Oprah Winfrey as a prominent example. She rose from poverty and a troubled youth to become one of the most powerful and influential woman in America. She came to prominence on television and, according to Forbes Magazine, she is the world's most highly paid media personality. She does what we also do. She reads and writes; listens and speaks; observes and behaves, as we also do. So what's the difference?! On a qualitative basis there is a lot that can be said, but in tangible terms the variation is an outstanding US\$ 500 million per annum! And how did she manage to achieve such a feat? In one word: EMPATHY. She is world-class when it comes to using the gift of empathy – an ability we all have, but most of us rarely use.

58

Oprah made her mark because she was unafraid to bare her soul and her own past ...

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How to Find a Job

Now the question is, which organization should you join? Who will hire you? Should your focus be on the social sector or the private sector? These might be the questions you are asking at the moment! To start with, I would urge you to find a job on merit alone. I know 'sifarish' is the routine way people find jobs in Pakistan. But please do not fall into this trap. Your degree and contacts may get you into a job, but it is your attitude and competence that will keep you there! I would pose the job search questions another way. Who should I work for? And why?

59 To answer these questions, you need to prepare yourself, by getting to know yourself better. Who are you? What makes you unique? Why should a company select you, from a choice of 50 others? What are your key strengths? What are your weaknesses? What are your goals for personal development? Why do you live? What is your mission in life? Do you have a personal vision for your life and set goals for the next five years? What motivates you? What has been your personal best leadership experience in school, college and career so far? Can you work well with people? Are you a team player? What proof, in the form of concrete examples, can you offer from your past experiences, that support your credentials as a manager and...

To read more of this article please visit www.navitus.biz

Building Self

Whose responsibility is it to develop the self? Who is going to make the difference? Who will confront the tough realities of life? Who will rise to better his economic and social condition? Who will choose to be happy and others happy? Who will dream and dare to make the dreams come true? Who will cooperate with others in worthwhile endeavors? Who will pray? Who will forgive? Who will apologize and mend fences? Who will listen? Who will lend a helping hand? It is the “I”, the “self” that has to perform. The “I” came to this world; the “I” will die to this life; and the “I” will do whatever it takes, in the interval between birth and death – no matter how long this time happens to be! There is no escaping the “self”

60

The realization that it is you, and no one else, that must initiate all thoughts and actions, is what calls for the “building self”. What does it take? Where do you begin? How about starting with “self” awareness!

To understand the self is to understand the universe. It is a very tall order. Whenever I ask participants in workshops: “do you know yourself?” the typical reply is a spontaneous “yes!” if you think in the same way about yourself – beware, your mind is shut. Know, that you don’t know yourself to the extent you...

To read more of this article please visit www.navitus.biz

Committing to Success

With the passage of time we become so familiar with ourselves and our surroundings that nothing amazes us any more. Yet, if we pause to observe life carefully, we will discover miracles in everything we see and experience.

On re-visiting an earlier article, I came to the realization that we need to press the 'refresh' button frequently to stay alive to the opportunities and threats around us.

It is encouraging to see that the corporate world in Pakistan has changed for the better during the past decade. Appreciation and practice of

61 professionalism and teamwork is on the rise. Many companies now have vision and values. Mission is on the corporate agenda. Learning and growing is slowly, but surely, becoming a norm. This is evidenced by the growing number of seminars, workshops and conferences being held in hotels throughout the country. Local companies have joined the multinationals in big numbers in hosting learning events and also in sponsoring creative educational initiatives. However, this is only the beginning and much has yet to be done.

Some day people will be queuing up bookstores, libraries and surfing the net in large numbers for knowledge, to furnish their minds and broaden their vision. I look forward to the day...

To read more of this article please visit www.navitus.biz

Up or Out

Our world is rapidly getting very competitive where only the 'fit' will survive. This oft repeated notion is driving many managers and CEOs to high levels of stress caused by fear. There is increasing uncertainty in the corporate world. A common consequence of heightened insecurity is mindless frenzy. This entails economic and social costs. Bad decisions, strategic or tactical, made in haste, are a case in point.

A quick review of history may help us gain valuable insights. From the beginnings of creation to the present day, we see stories replete with examples of survival of the fittest. The word 'fit' is deceptively simple, yet has pervasive significance for us all. The random House College Dictionary describes 'fit' as: 62 proper or becoming; adapted or suited; qualified or competent; worthy or deserving; prepared or ready; in good physical condition or health; of the right size or shape – all keys to survival and possibly endurance.

Why then, the hostility in some quarters, to the 'up or out' management philosophy? particularly in the underdeveloped and developing economies? This philosophy holds that the fit stay while the unfit, try to improve, or go. One factor that explains antagonism to such a thought is the lack of social safety nets in our society for those who are rendered jobless as a consequence of...

To read more of this article please visit www.navitus.biz

Kamran Rizvi is a regular contributor to Blue Chip Magazine. Below is a list of a few of his published articles:

- 63
- Leveraging creative talent
 - Making aggression your ally
 - Old world, new eyes
 - Thriving in change
 - Hard talking
 - Hard listening
 - Living with integrity
 - Developing future leaders
 - Executing change
 - Attracting desired talent
 - Cool heads wanted
 - Good is great
 - The comfort trap
 - Call for innovation
 - Stem the hemorrhage
 - The critical success factor
 - The hidden advantage
 - Strolling up Everest
 - Upside-down works!
 - Talk your walk
 - The vision thing
 - Distribution of power
 - Ultimate virtual reality

You can read these and others at www.bluechipmag.com



“To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.”

William Blake

Transform your life

It's now or never. You have what it takes. Realize this and your success is now! In this book, you will gain insights on how to take charge of your life because it is your business. You will get some hints on how to get what you want without breaking the hearts of those you love.

- Gain confidence and poise in your personal, social and professional interactions
- Take the small steps to become what you have always dreamed of
- Start leading a fulfilling life
- Remain calm and mindful in stressful situations
- Bring hope, peace and joy for those you care for

Your journey of a thousand miles will start with the first step you take.

GO FOR IT!

About the Author

Kamran Rizvi has made a unique place for himself in the history of a young nation straddled with a burgeoning population of over 170 million people, by pioneering the self-improvement and organizational development movement in 1991. Through his writings, workshops, seminars and inspiring speaking engagements in conferences and other fora, in the last two decades, he has, directly and indirectly, positively transformed the lives of millions in Pakistan. A flourishing learning and development industry has taken root making education and success an unstoppable agenda for change.

For more details on the author and his team, visit www.kzr.ca. Here you will find information on KZR and the organizations it has spawned since 1991.

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