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Foreword

Individually, every single one of us is capable of greatness. Collectively, a group of us are the key to any form of development in any aspect of the society. Like Shakespeare said, life is but a stage! We all have guaranteed roles. Unfortunately, though, many of us seem to think that we don't really have one. Get all the info you need here.



Inspiration Ignition and Integration

How To Create Inspiration Out Of Thin Air

Chapter 1:

Introduction

Synopsis

What is a role if you cannot improvise right? A stage director can only lay out his ideas and ensure that the props are set but it is in an actor's hands to deliver the performance. A stage director inspires while the actor ignites. The integration of such inspiration and ignition is the beginning of self development. Apply this analogy to yourself. Assuming you to be the actor and life the stage director, let's analyze how to succeed.



The Basics

Some actors are supposedly more 'talented' than the other. Unlike a stage director, life is impartial. It does not have a favorite and treats everyone the same way. The biggest difference that makes us unique in our stage is our roles. We differ based on the roles we play and the scene we are part of. The scene I speak of here is the criteria of rich, poor, happy, sad, urban area, rural area, etc. Irrespective of the scene however, life provides everyone with abundant opportunities. Of course you have talent! You find it, snag it and make money out of it, is probably what Woody Allen might say, but the essence of his crude line is pretty obvious isn't it?

The basic difference between animals and humans is the existence of the 'sixth sense' or the mind. What is the mind? Nobody can ever give a proper definition because unlike most things, the mind has no boundaries. The mind stores our memories, it keeps our secrets and all is the gateway for knowledge. At the same time, it also keeps a particular secret of ours very well. It is called our 'talent'. It varies from person to person but mainly, it varies because some know they are talented and some just don't.

Chapter 2:

Talent Recognition

Synopsis

Talent recognition is usually the early parts of a person's childhood. A proud parent cannot stop talking about his or her child's talents. Unlike a habit, a talent is something that is inbuilt and not something that you gather over time. Your talent is the one property that you don't need to trademark to prove that it is your own. However, talent is usually raw unless nurtured.

There are many inspiring people who have made it big solely based on their raw talent but the grandest of achievers are those who have developed their natural talent into some sort of a masterpiece. For example, on stage you can tell that the actor is well trained if he can emote much better than the rest right. Similar is the case in real life. Although very talented, many actors have not made it big. Why?

Realizing

There is a start to every career. The very first step toward success is goal setting. The greatest of achievers are usually the ones who have achieved over and above what they set out to do.

This doesn't necessarily mean that you have to set a small goal and achieve above that. The higher your goal, the harder you would work and the better your final performance will be.

Usually the process of goal setting involves two things namely a few targets and a goal. Targets are those small limits you set yourself up to reach before you eventually achieve your ultimate big goal.

From a high school student preparing for an exam to an executive preparing for a presentation to the stage actors preparing back stage, targets or goals are most essential. It not only gives you the clear field to play on but also enhances your performance because you know where you are headed. A very SMART way of setting goals followed by many these days is:

- **S** - Specific (or Significant).
- **M** - Measurable (or Meaningful).
- **A** - Attainable (or Action-Oriented).
- **R** - Relevant (or Rewarding).
- **T** - Time-bound (or Trackable).

This sort of segregation gives you an overall idea of what you mainly what you want to achieve. It also helps to keep things more organized. When you have separate and specific goals, you can have an easier

task when you map out how to achieve them. Setting personal goals not only gives you a destination, it also gives you a raise in self-confidence as you now recognize your own ability. By setting clear cut goals, you have are more focused and when you achieve each one of these you feel the sense of pride that you had forgotten about.



Chapter 3:

SWOT Analysis

Synopsis

The next step would be to find means to achieve these goals that you have set for yourself. The environment around you is a source for all kinds of opportunities.

Finding these opportunities can take awhile but when you do find - it is like releasing a dam of water. They are going to be knocking on your door all the time. Whether they knock once or twice is not the main issue. The issue is, frankly speaking, if you are ready to open the door. Are you ready to face the world and put your name out there?

A simple solution to this confusion is a SWOT analysis. Note down your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Analyze yourself because nobody knows you better than yourself. If your strengths outweigh your weaknesses then blindly open the door next time. However, if it is vice versa, what do you do?

SWOT

A typical self analysis tells a person how he understands himself. Where a SWOT analysis shows that you seem to have more weaknesses and threats, it calls for serious Self development. Self development involves improvement of self-awareness and self knowledge.

Also, it includes improving ones identity and self-perception. There are many 'self-help' groups in all parts of the country to aid in a person's self development. There groups not only help a person develop mentally, but also inspires him or her to ignite such integration in others as well.

Self development mainly revolves around a person's attitude towards things. Optimism is the first thing that self-help groups aim to develop in a person. The attitude reflects his outlook on life. The more positive the outlook, the better chances he has of proper utilization of given opportunities.

Also, self-help groups integrate people of the same type. This gives both emotional support and a sense of belonging to the person.

When you think you are going to fail, you do usually end up failing. Obviously, the immediate argument is that 'failure is the stepping stone to success'. How many of those stones are you going to step on before you plan to succeed?

A person who doesn't mind failure is a person who hasn't worked hard enough to succeed. A stage director never throws around

compliments. He moulds and builds his actors till they reach their peak. In similarity, life is not going to appreciate you for every stitch you make in achieving your goal. Only in actual achievement can you bask in your glory. Mould yourself, find your path and ensure you are focused enough to walk through it.

Robert Frost saw that the other road in yellow woods was not somewhere people liked to go. But he took that road anyway. Life has obstacles lurking around in every corner of your path toward your goal. The next step to self development is, planning.

Planning is basically the process of deciding how to do, what to do and when to do it. Once you are clear about these three aspects, no matter what path you take, your goal will never seem far.

An important thing to be considered about an actor is his versatility. He plays many roles in a single stage performance. A woman is first a girl, then a teenager, a lady, a mother, a grandmother and finally what is she? She leaves the world an inspiration to her offspring. Nobody is insignificant.

With or without your knowledge you probably inspire someone on a day to day basis. The key to self development is never underestimating yourself. The minute you set boundaries for yourself, your scope for development becomes immensely restricted.

Explore, reach out, and get involved with the other actors around you! They are merely playing many roles too. Boundaries don't keep other people out but they fence you in. You never know what you are

capable of until you take that step and go to the other side. Maybe the view from there is something you would love.

So now we have a goal, a way to reach it and a plan to go about our reaching process. What next? Execution of the above well laid out plans. All the hard hours you put into creating a plan for yourself will be worth it once you execute it just the way you plan. There are a few mind boggling questions that generally arise in most self help groups. Some of them being:

- Am I good enough for this?
- Will I succeed?
- Will this make a difference?

The most important question of them all being – How do I execute this plan?

What you have in front of you is a relatively simple plan of what you want. However, the confusion begins when you don't know how to do it. How do you suddenly just execute your plan? The answer to it a pretty little word in the English language called – inspiration.

Chapter 4:

Inspiration Generation

Synopsis

According to the dictionary 'inspiration' is the process of being mentally stimulated to do something especially creative in nature. Inspiration is not something you develop. It isn't something that you would wake up to one day. Inspiration is something that hits you without you knowing.

It maybe from a sight, a photo, an incident; the possibilities are endless. Once inspiration strikes you, don't ever let go. Remember the old proved try, try till you succeed?

Well, the wise man was probably talking about inspiration the importance of holding on to it till you succeed. How else do you think an actor emotes on stage? Life is our stage ladies and gentlemen and it is our turn to perform.

Inspiration

Inspiration can be broadly divided into two namely external and internal inspirations. Internal inspiration is what is commonly termed as motivation. Defined as willingness or a desire to do something, motivation is something that one develops on his own. Parents and teachers alike try very hard to motivate their students to achieve heights. Their words and advice can take children to only a certain level especially in the case of adolescents who think everything that they don't come up with on their own is wrong. Motivation can also be considered a stimulus of the external form of inspiration namely, a role model.

Everyone has someone they look up to. We all have that one person we strive to be. For teen girls it is usually the 'it' girl of their time, for boys it is probably a sports star. Irrespective of the person, a role model is always the cause for majority of the attitude changes and habits of youngsters these days. These role models may unintentionally teach good and bad things to their following.

Motivation is merely a process and cannot differentiate between bad and good. A child maybe motivated to do well as well as motivated to be something that is considered 'cool' but which is actually dangerous. Lot of care must be taken to ensure that a child is motivated in the right sense. The world is full of evils and as parents we will always want to protect our children. Inspire them instead to making them submit to you.

Inspiration not only plays an important role in execution but plays an even bigger role in self development. It is hard to accept that you are weak but even harder to accept that you are weak and want to change yourself for the better.

For the latter to happen, we need inspiration. Most youth these days either take things for granted or give up very easily. Achievers are those select few who go through hell but survive to tell the tale. They are those who want to give but find inspiration to keep going. Why is committing suicide frowned upon? Isn't the persons' bravery appreciable? No. Not at all because if he or she was really brave, they would have survived anything life throws at them.

So we now have our stage, our director, our role, our scene and our inspiration. The curtains are still down though. How to raise them? What is our lever?

Mere inspiration would be of no use if you didn't have the drive or need to achieve. An artist may have the talent and the inspiration but what actually makes him paint is his pure raw urge to paint. Such an urge, a kindling is what this whole charade is about. This urge is what stage directors call – ignition.

Chapter 5:

Ignition

Synopsis

How do you know if you have this urge? The sheer want to achieve is this urge that I am talking about. In a car, the ignition is the how you start the vehicle. In similarity, to an actor ignition of his passion is the start to a fantastic performance. In reality, ignition is the driving force that begins your quest to achieving your goal.

It is a continuous process and it does not merely stop at the start. It is a misinterpretation made in most self development studies that ignition is only the begging. On the contrary, ignition is the force that keeps your inspiration intact. When you think everything is going downhill, you have a small feeling of survival don't you? Somewhere you hope that things will get better and that very hope motivates you. In this case, your hope is your ignition.



Ignite

Ignition often gets people to do things faster and more efficiently. The form of ignition is mainly determined by the company you keep. Inspiration can be derived from any source and more often than not this source is usually the peer group. The whole concept of peer pressure arises from wrong ignition. A peer who ignites a sense of determination in you is a peer worth keep around. On the contrary, a peer who ignites anger and other such negative emotions would only cause you more problems and pains in the future. While having a huge group of friends can be of great use, it also tends to be a nuisance. The biggest possible advice that a person can give a teenager these days is:

There is no harm in being good.

The influence of peer pressure on the day to day activities of these teens and pre-teens is rather astounding. Not to mention in the current corporate world, peer pressure also seems to take the front seat. This mass ignition of hatred toward bosses is mainly due to peer pressure. The wrong sort of inspiration to do things that you don't usually do is something that has to be controlled or can prove to be deadly both emotionally as well as to you career.

The next important thing to remember while you execute your plan is dedication. A good actor is one who is absolutely dedicated to his work. He lives and breathes his role on the stage and ensures that he

delivers his best possible performance. A dedicated person will not only execute the plan he generates but he will also execute it perfectly. Procrastination is considered a common sign of laziness. What people don't see is that procrastination is also a sign for trouble. A person who procrastinates more than he gets work done is a person who has the most pending work. This not only adds to mental pressure, it also creates a feeling of always lagging behind. When you rush the process and inner workings of your mind, the result is seldom satisfactory.

Some however, feel that the thrill of leaving things to the last minute is a kind of inspiration for them. The sense of accomplishment they seem to get from just completion of their work is rather self depreciating. When you are capable of so much more, why adjust? There is a vast difference between adapt and adjust. While adjusting is more of a tendency, adapting is a strength that you need to survive in this world. The basic quality of every actor is adaptation. Be it to time, to place or even climate, every actor adapts. Adaptation to all circumstances and acceptance of all losses is the sign of true self development. The minute you are able to appreciate the grey of the sky and look at a glass as half full, is when you can guarantee yourself a step ahead than most of your kind.

In the present world and its ridiculous status quos, it becomes very difficult to adapt. The concept of hierarchy often draws such prominent boundaries that forces majority to succumb and adjust to the workings of the higher 'classes'. In such a scenario how can anyone expect any form of self development to take place? In simple

words, people ruin the chance of development in other people. Teenagers must be taught coherency and mannerisms rather than shopping and gaming.

Of course if there is a will there is a way isn't there? Countless inspirational movies like Shawshank Redemption teach people to never give up. In the movie, the lead character is sent to prison for a crime he claims to have never committed. When life throws him into a situation that many would feel impossible to get past, he finds a way out. What is the best part of the movie? He had a dream and ensures that he lives it eventually. As a stage, life is extensive. There is no particular or sure end to the roles you might get to play. When you don't know what the future holds why hold back? Everything you do deserves your full and hardest effort. Unless you give it your best shot, you can never expect good and worthy results.

One amongst the important aspects that a person needs to keep in mind when he is keen on self development is – integrity. There are more than a billion different kinds of jobs in this world. More than million are employed in each one of those jobs. However, some are frowned upon while the others are looked up to. What is the difference between a guy selling tickets inside the ticket counter and the guy selling the tickets outside the theatre? It is a simple term called integrity.

The dictionary defines integrity as honesty and a sense of moral uprightness. An honest would never bask in the glory of another hard

work. At the same time he would work hard and achieve his own glory to bask in. Integrity is an integral part of self development. Only if you are honest with yourself can you or the person helping you detect the stage you are at. After all self development is not an overnight process.

While there are many such important qualities that are essential for self development, integrity takes the top spot because until the SWOT analysis, you never knew where you stood. This may be due to many reasons but predominantly it is due to denial. When you lie to yourself that what you are is alright, the truth gets buried deep within your own heart. The honest effort to accept your mistakes and move on needs a quality like integrity. A liar can never stop lying no matter how hard he tries. But a person who lies to them self can always change. Integrity stops such denial and helps you move and aids in your quest to self development.



Chapter 6:

Integration

Synopsis

The interpretation of integration has been varied through the times. Integration can be broadly classified into 3 types namely integration of the mind, integration of people and integration of concepts. When one talks about the mind the common ideas that pop up into your head is that it is our sixth sense, it cannot be touched and it is so advanced that you can never set limits or boundaries to it. Each and every one of us is different because of many reasons which can mostly be overlooked. However, the difference that affects the thought process is the one that makes each one of us unique.



Put It Together

Integration of the minds or more predominantly known as ‘consensus ad idem’ is the meeting of the minds or coming to an understanding. On the event of such understanding, there comes a sense of belonging and in turn inspires the people to work together as a team. Individually when everything is under your control, you think you can do anything and everything under the sun. Independent people love themselves so much that they do not see how much they affect the people around them. This does not mean that being independent is a crime. The fine line between independence and arrogance is the differential factor in such cases. Teamwork or integration of the mind really tests a person. A person who works well in a team is a person who sure for his thoughts as well as appreciates the thoughts of his peers. To succeed in the current tech-savvy world, team work takes top priority. This brings us to the next concept of integration called integration of people.

In a dictionary, integration is defined as the inter-linking or mixing of people with one and other. This can be taken in the literal sense. When there is an understanding of the minds, the sense of belonging will bring people together. This sort of integration causes them to inspire for betterment together as a team. This in turn causes ignition of ideas and all in all there is an increase in overall performance. Integration of people maybe even at the self help group levels. Self help groups consist of mainly people with similar problems and therefore this brings them together. It gives them an opportunity to

learn from one and other and inspire each other to get better. However, integration of people doesn't end there.

When you achieve the two wheels of integration (of mind and of people), you develop a support system. People who know you very well don't really give you much room to think of your own progress. They often try to force betterment out of you. When there is a self help group full of people who have no idea of who you were, it gives you the chance to be someone new, to be someone you would want to be without much judgment. This is what is referred to as a support system. Support systems are similar to an external hard disk. When your inbuilt memory isn't enough, you look for an external hard disk for your computer. Similarly, a support system functions as a source of back up. They know how you exactly feel because they have been there too. They will ensure that if you fall, they are there to catch you. This helps a person to keep his hope alive and in turn motivates him to keep trying to succeed.

The third wheel of integration is the integration of concepts. This is a scenario that arises in the advanced levels of self development. Once you are ready and satisfied with your progress and you think you have good support system, integration of concepts becomes important. The concepts of inspiration, ignition and determination are the detrimental parts of one's path to true self development. Without inspiration, there can be no determination to do something and without determination there is no opportunity to ignite. These inter linked concepts are what makes us truly achieve self development.

To stage a Shakespearean play, a stage director has to work with a team of the best actors and ensure that his plans and forms of execution are well understood. This is because the level of difficulty of a Shakespeare script is very advanced. In reality, once you feel you have attained self development, Life is not going to get any easier. Team work will take you far, it will enhance your chances of survival in the field but your progress is completely in your hands. When do you stop this 'development' I keep talking about? Frankly, self development is never ending. You develop on a daily basis. You try to change yourself for every alternate person who finds fault with you. When do you achieve a point when you don't need to change any more?

True self development is not about being accepted but is all about accepting yourself. You must first live up to your very own expectations before thinking about another point of view. When self development extends to levels where your own passion inspires others around you, it is known as Personal Development. This sort of development goes over and beyond self help. It inspires and ignites the same kind of grit and passion to succeed amongst one's peers. Inspiration ignition is a very important criterion to be considered these days. A person who inspires has more value than a person who can memorize the text book.

Wrapping Up

True success

The right path to success can never be a guaranteed answer. It's a mere guess that varies from person to person. These are just guidelines that will help you along the path you choose. A common misinterpretation of success is that it is conclusive. It most certainly is not conclusive. Success is a randomly used term these days. True success is achieved only when it becomes impossible to achieve anything more. When you reach an age you never expected to reach, isn't it success as well? Isn't every day after that a success too? Every breath in fact is a success. Every line delivered by an actor is a success in his books. Every stroke by a painter is a form of success to him.

The one question I never addressed is probably, why inspire? Why should I be anything but what I am?

A very rhetorical question that most teens and pre-teens ask these days. Of course there is no necessity for you to change. When change is forced upon someone, it seldom ends with them actually changing. At the same time, I want you to consider what you would probably miss out on. It's not a case of mayonnaise or cheese nor is it a case of beauty and ugly. It is a deep and mature decision that you make that can have a very detrimental change in your lifestyle.

When you look at your brain child, that you created, being applauded by a huge crowd of people, the feeling of pure elation, isn't it worth the effort? When the need to achieve drives you to limits that you assumed you can never reach, isn't it worth the time? Why adjust and reduce yourself to be average when you know you can be so much better. The feeling of absolute pride when you know you contributed to the very beauty that inspired you is the feeling that you would miss out on if you don't make an effort to be better than what you currently are.

Whether or not the audience approves, it is an actor's duty to ensure that he gets his lines right with the appropriate dynamics that his director expects of him. Whether or not you manage to reach the top of the food chain; whether or not you manage to keep everyone around you happy; when you make an effort even the smallest of achievement will bring you a sense of happiness that nothing else can compare to.

In your final scene of the play, when the curtain is about to close, you look at the audience. When you see your loved ones there cheering you on, your support group waiting to catch you, there is only one thought running through your mind. Is it really over?

Life is a stage but like everything that happens on the stage, it too is very short. Why waste your role playing the bad guy when life is giving you the chance to change and give yourself a better climax? Unlike a stage director, life gives you free reign with your speeches

and actions. A wise man once said the more freedom a person got, the more he abuses it. How aptly put don't you think? Life gives you so much freedom that you sometimes don't know what to do with it.

Prevention is better than cure was not a joke cracked by an old man having cancer. It the truest of words every spoken. Inspire, ignite and integrate your thoughts and actions. Have a set plan and aspire to achieve great heights but at the same time don't let it control you. Break down your ideas and plans and give yourself room to inspire those around you to reach levels that you have achieved. Adapt to situations no matter what the circumstances and stay strong during the rough times. Teamwork especially will take you to places you can never dream of. Be independent but do not be arrogant. Lastly, no matter what happens, always know that there is a reason for it happening. When life can give you a role, it can also integrate many other roles with your own. It can throw obstacles from all sides. Like I said before, ask an actor if he ever received compliments from his director before the end of the show.

True success can never be defined. However, the path to any form of success is an inspiring story that needs to be told. Make stories of your own and someday you can be a stage director too.