

FOREWORD BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JEREMY HUNT MP

THE **POWER** OF  
**LEARNING**  
FROM **DAD**

DESIRE  
ATTITUDE  
DECISION

DR. SELVA PANKAJ

# CONTENTS

## 21 CHAPTERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY'S CHANGING WORLD

Introduction . . . . .	iii
Foreword . . . . .	xi
A Message from the Author . . . . .	xiv
Chapter 1: Desire . . . . .	1
Chapter 2: Attitude . . . . .	13
Chapter 3: Decision . . . . .	24
Chapter 4: Action. . . . .	35
Chapter 5: Gratitude . . . . .	47
Chapter 6: Faith . . . . .	58
Chapter 7: Knowledge . . . . .	70
Chapter 8: Imagination . . . . .	83
Chapter 9: Planning . . . . .	95
Chapter 10: Persistence . . . . .	107

Chapter 11: Influence . . . . .	118
Chapter 12: Friends . . . . .	129
Chapter 13: Stimuli . . . . .	141
Chapter 14: Mind . . . . .	152
Chapter 15: Wisdom . . . . .	164
Chapter 16: Impression . . . . .	175
Chapter 17: Opportunity . . . . .	186
Chapter 18: Laws . . . . .	199
Chapter 19: Ways . . . . .	210
Chapter 20: Character . . . . .	221
Chapter 21: Leadership . . . . .	231
Thoughts on The Power of Learning from DAD . . . . .	244
About Regent Group . . . . .	250

Publication date: March, 2023



## INTRODUCTION

**D**r Selva Pankaj is the CEO and co-founder of Regent Group – a global education, e-commerce, real estate and investment management organisation headquartered in London and Dubai.

Selva qualified as a chartered management accountant in the early 1990s before completing an MBA. He then attended both London Business School, Harvard Business School, the University of Oxford and Stanford University for postgraduate programmes. In 2019, Selva was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Bolton. The Higher Doctorate, Doctor of Education (Hon EdD) award is the highest academic distinction available within any UK university. In addition, he received a Post Honorary Doctorate too.

It was while studying at Harvard that the eminent scholar, Professor Clayton M. Christensen, told Selva: “You have got to know who you are and learn to differentiate between man-made laws and the laws of nature.” At first, Selva did not understand this; but it aroused his curiosity and led him to seek out and study great literature from a

variety of authors, including Napoleon Hill, Earl Nightingale, Wallace D Wattles, Stephen R. Covey, James Allen and Thomas Troward, in relation to human potential, behaviour and success. Those teachings, and the work of Bob Proctor –also a world-renowned speaker, educational coach and author – changed Selva’s life dramatically, as did working within Bob’s Inner Circle.

The words of Clay Christensen, in particular, prompted Selva in 2016 to revisit the teachings of his late father, Senior Selvanayagam, who died in a tragic accident in 2006. That traumatic event was unlike anything he had experienced previously, even during the war in Sri Lanka.

It was those teachings, and Selva’s ongoing studies, that form the basis of this book and have propelled Selva to become a champion of ‘inside-out education’. Selva incorporates the writings of the above-mentioned authors over the following pages, sharing their wisdom alongside that of his late father (known as Selvam which translates as ‘wealth’ in Tamil, an ancient language originating from South India).

Selva’s father – one of ten children - was born in 1934 into a poor family and lived under British rule until 1948 before the country became independent. He went out to work at the age of 18. In the early stages of his life, his elder sister’s husband passed away, leaving her with young children for whom Selva’s father took responsibility. Over time, he emerged as the family leader and set out to ensure his sisters were all well settled and looked after, meeting Selva’s mother in the early 1960s and marrying her in 1967.

Selva's mother had a difficult time as she lost her father when very young. She worked for the British, in health and medicine, before going on to work in the Sri Lankan health service. While this book may focus on the teachings of Selva's father, his mother played no lesser role in his upbringing and taught him about the workings of the mind.

When Selva was growing up in Sri Lanka, it was a country torn apart by civil war. Both the Tamil and Sinhalese people were caught up in the ongoing violence and disruption - a feature of Selva's daily existence. As the military campaigns grew more violent and the protection offered by the status of the family diminished, staying in Sri Lanka became untenable and the family fled to the UK. Selva arrived in 1990 carrying only a suitcase and £100.

On arrival in the UK, Selva and his family became refugees and were forced to start again. His cousin, Praba, gave him the only shelter on offer.

Selva adopted his late father's name, shortening his surname to Pankaj, just as he had done with his father's first name, Selvanayagam.

Together with his wife, Tharshiny, and late father, Selva founded Regent Group in 2000. The business started with one private tuition student generating £20/hour and has since grown into a multi-million-pound company with a diverse portfolio of educational, real estate and investment management divisions.

Regent Group specialises in education and Selva and Tharshiny are incredibly proud to have educated tens of thousands of students, helping them to achieve their potential and attain great educational and career success. It now operates in the UK, United States, India, GCC and Dubai with a global focus and the goal of creating a British university (**Regent Hill University**), yet to be approved, with UK degree-awarding powers. Selva and Tharshiny believe that this university will not only enable affordable education within the UK, but also act as a beacon of positive mental attitude and aspiration, offering British degrees all over the world. Its educational pedagogy is underpinned by the philosophies of Napoleon Hill and the Carnegie Foundation, using educational science to accelerate learning and personal development.

Regent College, London, has also expanded its portfolio to include **NCUK**, offering the International Foundation Year and International Year One in Business Management pathways to give students direct guaranteed access to leading **NCUK** universities in the UK and worldwide upon successful completion of their studies. Once they progress to university, students can choose one of the thousands of different degree courses on offer, enabling them to enter a rewarding career or embark on further study.

To facilitate this expansion, there will be one London campus with multiple buildings, including a brand-new, modern and tech-enabled development in Harrow. The eco-friendly building will be called **Pankaj House** and is due to be completed by 2025.

Regent Group recently expanded its product offerings through the creation of its e-commerce enterprise, **Regent Learning** – a collection of partnership programmes with highly reputable institutions around the world. Students have the option of choosing a digital online and/or digital on-demand course to boost their skills, fast-track their careers and achieve professional and personal goals.

One such Regent Learning joint venture is with the prestigious **Stanford University** in the USA. Ranked third in the world, all Regent students will have the opportunity to learn from world-class professors and industry experts. With its strong entrepreneurial culture and extensive knowledge and application of technology, students are being offered a unique digital on-demand educational programme focusing on innovation and business. The programme equips learners with innovative and entrepreneurial skills that will boost their personal development, academic achievement and career prospects.

In addition, Regent College academics and staff are being offered live-virtual train-the-trainer sessions by Stanford Online which will give them the tools and skills to help students engage and learn from the Stanford Regent programme.

This is a transformational experience for Regent students, academics and staff that will unleash their potential to learn, grow and act through building self-confidence, expanding knowledge and acquiring new skills.



Another exciting Regent Learning partnership is with global EdTech leader and provider, **Skillsoft**, and its Percipio virtual learning environment – the world’s most complete technology. Regent students in India and the GCC have been offered exclusive access to three core learning and development packages: Technology and Development, Leadership and Business, and Technology and Leadership. The digital online and on-demand courses focus on emerging tech and leadership skills with the aim of identifying and filling skills gaps, developing in-demand skills, boosting employment prospects, and preparing for a career change.

Also, students keen to learn or upgrade their coding skills will be delighted at the new online short courses and microcredential UK and global programmes on offer by the **Code Institute** – the UK and Europe’s only university credit-rated coding bootcamp. The one-year groundbreaking Full Stack Coding Diploma teaches students the languages, frameworks and tools to enter a career in agile development. Students will also have the option to study levels 3 and 5 in Software Development.

Other Regent Learning offerings include an innovative digital online and digital on-demand Executive MBA programme partnership with the **University of Potomac** in Washington, USA. This Master’s degree will prepare graduates for today’s highly competitive marketplace. They will learn executive-level skills for leadership, tech-driven innovation and how to be a decisive, strategic decision maker. The programme also includes two residencies.

In addition, Regent Learning has partnered up with the New York-based, **Mountbatten Institute**, to jump start young professionals in their careers in finance and banking. The 12-month programme places the trainees in world-class companies where they can develop the business and financial skills required to accelerate their careers.

Similarly, those in business and aspiring entrepreneurs will be able to learn how to become business experts by mastering the tools, concepts and strategies to launch or upscale a business or organisation through **The Power Business School**. Trainers include the founders and top executives of Tesla, Airbnb and Netflix.

Regent Learning has teamed up with **Doman International in the USA** to offer its world-renowned holistic programme for brain-damaged children in the UK, GCC and India. This unique initiative, based on the Doman method, helps babies and children with special needs reach their fullest potential through cognitive, physiological, nutritional, physical, sensory and speech development tools and resources.

To help more people achieve success, the **Thinking into Character** suite of transformational learning programmes, created by Selva, is now being offered as part of Regent Learning. The programme helps build confidence, eliminate negative thinking, identify goals and overcome anxiety. It teaches people how to have strong self-belief, be resilient and always persevere.

Regent Group supports **The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme** – the world’s leading youth achievement award - which empowers young people, aged 14-24, to develop a range of life and transferable skills in preparation for when they enter the world of work, such as communication, problem-solving and teamwork. There are three levels – bronze, silver and gold – that incorporate different and challenging activities ranging from volunteering to caving to expeditions. The aim is to build confidence, resilience and self-esteem.

The 21 chapters in this book provide an integrated approach to personal growth and the attainment of success. If you apply their principles and follow the recommendations, you will not only learn, grow and develop but you will also find your true character that will sustain and nourish you for the rest of your life.

## FOREWORD

**B**y The Right Honourable Jeremy Hunt MP, Former Foreign Secretary

*Jeremy Hunt is a renowned public servant, successful entrepreneur, great thinker, wonderful husband, caring father and true gentleman.*

*A British politician who has served as Conservative Member of Parliament for South West Surrey since 2005, he was a member of the Cabinet from 2010 to 2019. He is the longest-serving Health Secretary in British political history, in the role from 2012 to 2018, and was Foreign Secretary from 2018 to 2019.*

*Jeremy was a candidate for Leader of the Conservative Party, and Prime Minister, in the 2019 leadership contest, and since January 2020 has been serving as Chair of the influential Health and Social Care Select Committee. Before entering politics, he co-founded the highly successful educational listings company Hotcourses.*

Dr Selva Pankaj has a remarkable story to tell. He was born in

Sri Lanka into a wealthy, happy and stable family but grew up in a society ravaged by civil war. Forced to flee to the UK in 1990, his family started over again. Having arrived without a penny to his name, he now leads a successful multi-million pound educational business as well as being a proud husband and father. Not only does this book make a powerful case for the impact desire, attitude and decision-making can have on your life but it is a first-hand account of how to put those ideas into practice.

Selva's education business, the Regent Group, has an ethos that the purpose of education is character. As Anne Frank said, 'Human greatness is not about wealth or power but character and goodness.' That could also be Selva's personal motto, as anyone who has met him will attest. Character, he says, is everything and the most difficult times are when you see your true character emerge. He has certainly had his share of such times, growing up in fear of violence and losing his father in a tragic accident. Those experiences weathered him and made him not just driven and successful but also thoughtful and reflective.

Since I have had the pleasure of getting to know Selva, he has told me many times of the lessons he has written about in this book. What has always struck me most is his passion for learning and his infectious belief in the power of human potential. This book is about that – but is also a love story about the enduring strength of a personal bond between father and son. Many wish they could write a similar book about their own father and it is enormously to his credit that he has done so.

But the book has a broader purpose: to inspire. Selva talks in the book about the importance of a 'growth mindset' – the idea that you

are always learning, always developing at whatever stage of your life and whatever difficulties you may face. Other writers such as Matthew Syed have written powerfully about the impact such a mindset can have in sport and business. Selva writes about the same thing in an intensely personal way that shows his own concept of success is far more rounded than merely the impressive size of the educational business he has set up.

Selva mentions in the book his plans to build a memorial hall and Selvanayagam Square in Sri Lanka to remember his father. When that happens, it will form a wonderful tribute. But the greatest legacy to his father will be the ideas in this book.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Reader,

I would first like to thank you for making a committed decision to read this book. I am honoured that the thoughts I have written here may lead you to make significant changes to your way of thinking and, in turn, bring greater success and contentment to your life.

The message contained within this book is what I have learned from my father. While perhaps I did not fully appreciate the wisdom of his words when he was alive, since his departure in 2006, I have thought a great deal about his teachings and come to recognise the enormous value they hold.

This book is called *The Power of Learning from DAD*, with the acronym DAD spelling out Desire, Attitude and Decision, three of the qualities so highlighted by my father. In Tamil, dad translates to Appa, and I like to say A is for Attitude, wrapped around two Ps for Persistence and Planning, and then the final A is for Action. Take action is exactly what my father always told me to do.

I believe that my daughters, Sharanie and Dharanie, will pick up this book at some point and embrace the lessons it contains. I am immensely proud of both of them as they continue to grow into young women in a household full of positivity, which I know will set them up for a fantastic future. My daughters may not pick up the book now, but I am confident they will in time, as they themselves begin to learn this language and these concepts.

It is a joy to be a father. I was an only child, and it was a joy that I got to spend great time with my mum and dad. Dad was a huge personality and made a big impact on me, while my mum was equally influential and supportive, playing a great role in making me who I am. I am incredibly grateful to both of them for what they have given me over many years. I lived with Dad for 36 years, while Mum passed away in 2012, when I was 42. Being an only child, I think you get to know your parents better, and I had a great experience with the three close members of our family.

While this book is about my father's teachings, I never overlook the incredibly important role that my mother played in my upbringing. Mum was all about the mind for me; she came from the healthcare profession and later became a lecturer in medical schools, understanding a great deal about the workings of the mind.

In the early stages, Dad had a big extended family and so there were some challenges in my parents' relationship – Mum wanted a private life and Dad wanted a more public one. That, perhaps, caused some misalignment in their world throughout their lives: both of them were big public servants and givers in their own way, and they went on to have a fantastic life as a couple, even though Dad liked to



constantly welcome visitors to their home and Mum preferred to be more private.

Together, they created this person called Selva Pankaj, who is now focused on sharing their message and taking their work forward, ever mindful of the need to maintain that public/private balance and spend time with family.

I look at the 120-year history of our family since my grandfather was born in 1901, and what we have created, and I am proud of the great oak tree that has come from those acorns. In many years' time, these books will exist, and I know, after some time, my girls will take their work forward and their families will take them even further. We will also leave some physical evidence of this family, in particular through a Memorial Square that I am creating where my parents were born in the town of Batticaloa on the east coast of Sri Lanka. That square will be called Selvanayagam Square and will stand at the corner of Covington Road, the road where our family residence is based. We will also create a memorial hall for the Selvanayagam Memorial Hall in Covington Road, Batticaloa so that we may be remembered for hundreds and hundreds of years.

I am dedicating this book to my father and my mother. At one point, my mother wrote a book about my father – about their romantic life in the 1960s. I was born into a fantastic family and I feel I am now passing on the baton and creating a strong foundation for the Selvanayagam family to go forward.

We have started a charity foundation in the family name, will begin work on the Memorial Square, and now I will publish this book

on my 50th birthday. It is about putting a stamp on history for the Selvanayagam family. It may be that they created only one son, but the one who can do a great deal to take this message forward, with the huge support that he has from his wonderful wife Tharshiny, and his two exceptional children.

The fabulous Regent Group, and the wonderful team that we have created over 20 years, is so powerful, as are our incredible friends and family. I believe leadership is critical, so I am taking leadership and putting these foundations in place for the family to be remembered for generations to come. In that journey, writing this book *The Power of Learning from DAD* is so important. Dad was called Selvanayagam, which means ‘richness of wealth’ in Tamil, and he was a wealthy man when I was growing up. He lost everything when we left Sri Lanka, only to gain more when we came to the United Kingdom.

Dad always felt we would gain many hundred times more, because he said it was about our thoughts and how we can become what we think about. He absolutely always thought about prosperity, opulence, giving and having a fantastic life. Clearly, I will do the same. My children will do the same, and Regent Group and the team will do the same. We are developing some great talents and minds, and Regent Group will become a global company, taking forward this great message that ‘the end result of education is character’, which was invented over a dinner table discussion with my father.

I remember when we were starting our business, after I had begun doing private tuition, and Dad said that we needed a motto to set out why we were doing it. Dad came up with ‘the end of education is character’, and we kept that motto for 20 years. Then, a few months

ago, our wonderful English teacher Stephen Harris pointed out that we should add the word ‘result’, to say ‘the end result of education is character’, because even though the former is grammatically correct, that addition makes it clearer for everybody to understand.

Character is everything and Dad said character really shows when you are not having a good day, when you are facing challenges. I am writing this book during the Covid-19 lockdown, which is going to be remembered for many years to come. One person I am grateful to is Claire Coe, who I met several years ago and who has been a wonderful partner in this journey. I am extremely grateful that Claire and I were introduced by our mutual friend Ronel Lehmann, who I must thank for his enormous generosity of spirit. In recent months, I have been sharing a lot of the information in my heart with Claire, and she is a great writer who has been able to capture my thinking and turn my words into this book. I am sure Claire and I are going to do a lot more books together, having created a fantastic working relationship.

This entire book comes from within, from the things my father has talked about, and from my research since meeting Clay at Harvard Business School. I have studied a lot since then, every day, making relationships between what Dad and Clay have told me and the teachings of many other great thinkers. After meeting Clay, I was introduced to Bob Proctor, who has also been a huge inspiration for me. Bob made everything so simple – I am eternally grateful to these three wonderful men who have made such a fantastic contribution to my life and wellbeing. I look at Bob and every time I speak to him I feel like I am with my father, because the two of them were born

in the same year, 1934, and they share so many wonderful qualities.

In this book, I am telling those stories, combining practice, theory, history and humour. I really believe it is a fantastic read and I must thank Claire for her exceptional ability to turn my heart into words. For that, I am ever so grateful. We now plan to do lots of great books like this, so watch out for the next one! We will launch our next book on 20 August 2021, when I am 51, just as I committed a year ago to launch this book on my 50th birthday. It will be an annual project, and this will become a series, so Claire and I are looking forward to transforming the world by talking to people so that they can learn a lot more.

Today, Regent Group is on a wonderful journey towards creating a UK university, subject to all the necessary regulatory approvals. We will name it Regent Hill University, because it has two cornerstones: one is the Carnegie Foundation and the other is Napoleon Hill. Hill was asked by Carnegie to research human potential and his writings underpin so many of the concepts that mattered to my dad and which I write about in this book. Hill lives on through these pages and inspires many of my beliefs.

Through my books *Thinking into Character* and *The Power of Learning from DAD*, Regent is on a journey towards creating an ecosystem focused on positivity. We are also in the process of launching a positive news app for the 21st century, called Gaudium News – gaudium means ‘joy’ in Latin. Gaudium News will challenge current media by highlighting only positive news and moving away from the overwhelming focus on negativity, with the long-term goal of transforming thinking and making our planet a better place to live for

future generations.

Thank you for picking up this book and thank you for reading. If you have also read *Thinking into Character*, my previous book, you will appreciate why I passionately believe that the combination of these two can make the world a better place of peace and harmony. To this end, Tharshiny and I have also launched the Global Unity Forum, to break down barriers between different tribes, groups and religions following our experience of conflict in Sri Lanka, where both of us were born.

We are also extending our support to the Unstoppable Foundation, a non-profit humanitarian organisation bringing sustainable education to children and communities in developing countries. Dad never wanted a charity in his name, believing instead that we should not hold the money, but rather act as a conduit to support good causes, and so that is the path we have chosen to follow.

One thing I would say is do not just read this book once. When you read it once, it will go into your conscious mind, but if you read it over and over again, that constant repetition will effectively put these messages into your subconscious mind. It is a story and it is not necessary that you agree with everything my father has said, but clearly you can make up your own mind and I know that you will benefit from the messages it contains.

Warren Buffett, who over the years has shared so much advice and wisdom with so many people, was once asked what was the best piece of advice he has ever been given. He said that the greatest learning he ever received was from his father, and it came not in the form of

words, but in the form of unconditional love. There is a huge amount of similarity there, as I share that same experience of having received nothing but unconditional love, support, belief and wisdom from my dad. With such unconditional love, backed by teaching and learning, I truly believe any human being can achieve anything they want.

I am an only child, without a living parent, and it is sad that I do not have many people in my immediate family. There are few that can empathise. One person who is in the same situation is my good friend Professor George Holmes, Vice Chancellor of the University of Bolton. George and I have developed a relationship professionally, but one thing that connects us emotionally is that we are both only children without our parents. So, whenever we can, we share a bottle of Bordeaux and ‘talk over a good sugar’! I am very fond of George and thank him for his friendship over many years.

Thank you also to Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, our former Foreign Secretary, who kindly agreed to write the Foreword to this book. It is a delight that I have got to know Jeremy in recent years, and it has been an honour and a privilege to be able to discuss the issues set out in this book with him.

I am contactable via [selva@rtc.uk.net](mailto:selva@rtc.uk.net) should you want to get in touch; I would love to hear from you.

I trust that you will travel well on your personal journey – do please keep studying and learning about the natural laws explained on these pages.

Dr Selva Pankaj

# CHAPTER 1

## DESIRE

I am dedicating this chapter to my father, who has been a great inspiration for me. This book is called *The Power of Learning from DAD*. For the rest of the world, the first D represents ‘desire’, while the A is for ‘attitude’ and the second D for ‘decision’. But for me, this is all for my father, who I lost in a tragic accident. In this chapter I am going to begin sharing the experiences and the teaching that I got from him as a child and until I was 36, when I lost him.

We had an exceedingly difficult, but happy, family life when I was young. I was born in Sri Lanka and, during the war up until 1990, life was incredibly difficult. The memories I have from between the ages of 10 and 20 were of experiencing the war and living with fear.

In 1990, we came to the United Kingdom and we were so grateful for this wonderful nation that gave us a home when we were not able to lead a peaceful life. My parents and I started our lives here and we

had a fantastic 16 years with my dad. That was a formative period when I learned a lot from him. Prior to that in Sri Lanka, in the middle of the war, it was very difficult, and I was incredibly young.

This chapter is about the years of spending time with a great man who had huge, huge wisdom and the ability to see a lot of things and explain them in simple terminology.

This chapter is also heavily indebted to the work of Napoleon Hill, and particularly his book *Think and Grow Rich*. Hill talked about desire, and you will see many of my dad's teachings mirror those thoughts. I frequently wonder whether my dad himself may have read Hill's works and was trying in his own way to pass those insights to me. Throughout this chapter, there will be analogies between Dad's words and Hill's writing and one can therefore read this as an extended discussion of that work. For me, these are just insights passed to me from my dad.

So, what is desire? Desire is something that we have absolutely burning inside us, to do what we want to do. Every human being who reaches a particular age of understanding should have a purpose to their life and set a goal. Once they have a purpose and they have set a goal, the desire to achieve that goal needs to be developed.

Desire is a state of mind that becomes an obsession. It involves planning definite ways and means to acquire your stated dreams and backing those plans with persistence, which does not recognise failure. Sometimes there is a perception that a goal is always financial in nature, but that is not the case; it is something that you really, really want to achieve. Desire is the method by which a goal is



achieved, which can then be transmitted through to success, which is often financial.

Dad used to talk about a step-by-step plan as a means to achieving success. He said that first you just need to know exactly what you want. He always impressed on me the need to be very precise; you need to know exactly what you want and have a mental picture of that.

‘The next step,’ he said, ‘is you need to know what you are going to give in order to achieve.’ He always said there’s never a free lunch, there’s never something for nothing. He believed that if you want to achieve something, first you have got to give. You can only receive if you first give.

My subsequent studies with Bob Proctor and learning from the work of Earl Nightingale have expanded my ideas around this concept, but at the time I must admit I did not have the faintest clue what Dad was talking about. At the time, even though I studied physics, I did not quite understand the basic law that every action has its equal and opposite reaction, so exactly what you give is exactly what you receive.

Sometimes people, including myself, confuse giving with trading. Trading means doing something for something in return, which is premeditated. By doing that, the laws of nature say you cannot actually receive what you really want. These are extremely interesting ideas that I will discuss in more depth later in this book, as I discuss more about my father’s teachings.

He used to tell me a story in which one day he won the lottery. I do not believe in lotteries but for some reason he went and bought those

tickets. Having lost everything, maybe he thought someday he might win. But he always told me that if he won, he would give me half of it and the other half would go to others. In fact, he did win £50 at one point and he stuck to what he said. This may be a trivial story, but my dad was a true giver.

Another important step is to establish a definite date by which you intend to achieve; that is incredibly important. He always stressed that I might not achieve by that particular date because I wasn't perfect and could not be sure what would happen in the future. And he used to tell me I must pick a date and work towards it. 'When you do get to the date,' he said, 'do not be disappointed if you have not achieved, just accept that you are not perfect. But carry on and devise another plan.'

That takes us to the next point, which is to create a definite plan for carrying out your desires. Begin at once, whether you are ready or not, to put this plan into action. Do it now, absolutely now. Do not think about it and procrastinate; people that do that do not achieve their goals. The people who achieve their goals have a burning desire as soon as they think about something to get it done.

Dad also advised to write out a clear and concise statement on what you intend to achieve, to imagine you have already got it, and then work backwards to the present. Live from that space. There is a lot of research by Napoleon Hill, Earl Nightingale, and other great authors, talking about goal achievement, success and life fulfilment, that builds on this point. Dad used to talk about just living in that space and I can now relate to that.

Finally, he said, ‘Repeat what you really want, just emotionalise it every day and put it into your subconscious mind.’ Obviously, I did not understand this creative process at the time, but he meant build it into your mind. In fact, when I went to Harvard, my life started to change through my studies with Professor Clay Christensen. Around the time that I lost my dad in the accident, I had an encounter with Clay. He talked to me about the laws of nature, which I did not understand at the time.

Dad used to talk a lot about values and these steps that I have described. He used to say, as Hill has said, that if you truly desire something so keenly that your desire becomes an obsession, it has got to be a positive. You will have no difficulty in convincing yourself that you will acquire it, if it is there, deep in your subconscious mind.

The objective is to want something that is valuable – something that you really want, rather than what others want. You must then become so determined to have it and convince yourself that you will have it, because thoughts become things. Now I relate to what Bob Proctor said and what Dad used to say, which was, ‘If you can see it in your mind, then you will hold it in your hand.’ I never understood that, but it is true, because your ambitions can become reality through imagination, careful planning and self-discipline.

Only those who become conscious for achievement ever accumulate rewards and achieve. To expand on this idea: you do not always need to do hard labour, sometimes it is about shifting your thinking. Dad used to talk about working on remote control. What he meant was that he wasn’t necessarily always doing things, but he was always thinking;

he understood things were happening in the way that he would like things to happen. Again, it was exceedingly difficult at the time to comprehend, but now I can reflect and understand.

You can never have success in great quantity unless you work yourself into that desire and believe in that desire. Hill said that every great leader, from the dawn of civilisation down to the present, has been a dreamer, and my dad also talked about dreams, by which he meant imagination. He always compared science and theology, with the science being about the cause and effect, the action and reaction, and my thinking really came from him.

In theology, Hill observed how Christianity is the greatest predictive power in the world today, because its founder was an intense dreamer who had the vision and imagination to see reality in the spiritual form, or non-form. Sometimes reading the word spiritual goes into a different tangent, but it is about the non-form, the things we cannot see. Throughout this book I will talk about non-form, rather than using the word spiritual, which is a synonym.

Before it is transmuted into a physical form, if you do not see great success in your imagination it will never come to you, he always said.

Dad always talked about the power of tolerance. He said tolerance and an open mind are practical necessities for life, and if you have a desire and you want to achieve, tolerance is absolutely crucial. He was the embodiment of tolerance, yet when I was young, I was the opposite. Mum had a fiery personality and perhaps I got some of that from her or from my environment, but nevertheless my dad was absolutely tolerant.

He used to tell us a story about a couple who were arguing. The husband was very tolerant, but the wife had a lot to say to him. She wanted him to react and he was not reacting so she got really annoyed. She threw the water from the sink at him and demanded he react rather than being completely quiet, but he just stood up and walked away.

There has never been a time more favourable for people to dream and to desire to achieve. There is no substitute for hard work, but it is very important to have a deep desire and plan to acquire your share of success – you are not taking away from anyone, because there is an abundance there – you just need to take your piece.

My dad always encouraged me from an incredibly young age; he said do what you like to do. Even though he gave me advice, he always let me do what I wanted. I am now practising that with my girls, even though sometimes it is not easy.

To win these massive stakes you must capture the spirit of the great pioneers of the past, whose dreams have given to civilisation all that now has value. He talked about the discovery of America. He talked a lot about Henry Ford, as did Hill. They observed how Ford was a poor, uneducated man who dreamed of the horseless carriage. He just worked with ballsy pizzazz, without waiting for an opportunity to fail. Now, in the 21st century, cars are everywhere and the extension of Ford is Tesla, taking that human element away. The horses were taken by Ford and now Tesla is going to take away the human element with autonomous cars. More dreams are coming into effect.

I remember Dad telling me about the Wright brothers. He said they dreamed about a machine that could fly. They were two mechanics

and they said they could do it, while the rest of the world said it was impossible. Even though their flying machine took them a long time and the first version only flew for a few seconds, and even though there were sceptics, they thought they could fly across the Atlantic. Dad always said that if you have a deep desire and you want to do something, just go and do it. When it is done, those same observers will have a different view.

He always said we are not here to compete – if you really want competition, then compete with yourself, push yourself every day to make progress. That fits in very well with my research now, where you set a goal and then we say, as Earl Nightingale did, ‘success is a progressive realisation of a worthy goal’.

While I am writing *The Power of Learning from DAD*, I’m so pleased to connect the pieces of the jigsaw. It is making huge sense to me – what I learned in my formative years in Sri Lanka, in the United Kingdom, and then, after losing him, reflecting upon everything that he had spoken to us about.

Dad always talked to me about how the oak sleeps in the acorn, the bird waits in the egg, and because it is meant to happen, it will happen. You do not really need to do anything for the acorn to become the oak tree, but nature helps. He used to say you have to do certain things in a certain way every day. I read about that now and I would love to ask him whether he read these books that I am reading now.

He talked about a burning desire to do something. When he was with us, on the brink of the 21st century, he said the world no longer rejected ideas like it used to when he was young. Now, the acceptance

is there and if you come up with ideas, there is only a small minority who will say things are not going to work. There is an acceptance that you can think differently and bring new ideas into reality.

Remember, too, that many who succeed in life get off to a bad start and pass through heart-breaking struggles. The turning points in the lives of those who succeed usually come at the moment of some crisis, through which they are introduced to their other selves. I can absolutely relate to that. Dad went through various things and, in my own way, my life changed with losing him in that tragic accident on 23 July, 2006. I absolutely changed and over the past 14 years I have been through a gradual realisation of everything.

Dad talked about the renowned poet John Milton, and how he became successful and identified a lot of things in his life after becoming blind. Rather than just sitting thinking and doing nothing as a result of blindness, Milton continued to dream and translate his dreams into organised thought. My Dad talked a lot about Milton, and also about Edison, the world's greatest inventor. Edison was a telegraph operator who believed in more. One of my dad's early jobs was as a telegraph operator but he failed miserably on many occasions to tap into the genius that slept within his brain.

Dad would always say it is not the people that attend the top business schools and top universities that are creative. We are all creative, we all have the desire, but we have to train ourselves to deliver. The problem is, for lots of people, that does not make sense. How do you do it? Perhaps a lot of people have unconscious competence. Some people can play music without learning it, but some people have to learn music to play music.

The other thing Dad always used to say was, ‘Do not wish for anything, but instead be ready to receive it.’ That is another idea that Hill also spoke about. You are not ready for anything until you really believe you can do it. He talked about the state of mind to believe, not just to desire and hope.

He was incredibly open minded. He said that it is especially important because closed minds are not going to get anywhere. He said no more effort is required than to aim high, demand what you want and accept nothing less. A great poet, Jessie B Rittenhouse, once said that if you bargain in life for a penny, then a life will pay no more. That sums it up quite nicely. Dad always said that when we spoke in Tamil, which is one of the world’s oldest languages and I am translating that to English. Even though he studied in a number of languages, in the household in Sri Lanka we spoke Tamil. He said, ‘I bargained with life for a penny, and guess what, that is what I got.’ It is interesting that he clearly understood that.

There is one more story that I would like to share. When I was incredibly young, Dad used to recount a story, which probably has its origins in Hill’s book to which this chapter is indebted. There were two friends and one was gravely ill, but incredibly calm and strong. Fearing this may be his last opportunity, the man visited his sick friend in hospital as he was about to undergo a serious operation. He was so fragile the doctors feared for his life. As they wheeled him down to the operating theatre, the sick man just whispered feebly into his friend’s ear, ‘do not be disturbed, machan’, which is what they call a friend or buddy in Sri Lanka. Despite the nurses and doctors thinking he may not pull through, he did. He survived that operation through nothing



but his own desire to live. The doctors thought he had no chance, but he wanted to live. He would not have pulled through but for his refusal to accept the possibility of death.

My dad talked about the power of desire, backed by faith. When it comes to faith you have to be incredibly careful; I'm not necessarily talking about religious faith. I am talking about, and Dad believed in, the faith of believing in oneself. Now I have a different definition of faith, which I have taken from Clarence Smithson and which I would like to share here – the ability to see the invisible, believe in the incredible and receive what the masses think is impossible.

The opposite of faith is fear. Both are unknown and intangible – you can either have faith or fear. An example is that ill man going to the operating theatre. He had complete faith and believed he would come through. If that had started to shake, if he had started to think he was doomed, perhaps maybe he would have died.

There are so many medical surgeons and doctors that I have heard talk about peace of mind that leads a particular operation into success or failure. In fact, one of our good friends, Professor Nadey Hakim – who is a world-renowned surgeon specialising in transplant and obesity surgery in the United Kingdom – always says it is the state of mind, not just of the surgeon but also the patient, that leads to success. He talks about the importance of calming patients and telling them that everything is going to be fine, even though in some cases the surgeon might have a different view. It is important that emotions are put in harmony.

Through the power of nature, you can actually achieve anything

that you like. Nature wraps up in the impulse of strong desire something that recognises no such word as impossible and no such reality as a failure, Hill said. There is no failure, only temporary setbacks, and you need that to go deep into the psyche.

Am I practising this 100%? Not at all. I am just sharing this information, and I am learning again. I am greatly confident that by sharing this and reflecting on it, different ideas will come, and I am humbly confident that I am making progress and by making progress I can help everyone.

To wrap up this chapter, while I am talking about Dad, for me it is my dad. For some of the readers, the dad will represent desire, attitude and decision, and we will continue to look in more depth at those over the coming chapters.

## CHAPTER 2

### ATTITUDE

**M**y dad used to say that our attitude is defined as who we are and how we act, including the feelings and the moods we have. He said our attitude is comprised of our actions, feelings and mood. If you have a good attitude, people will always respond to you in the same way. Likewise, if you have a bad attitude, you will probably get the same in return.

That is something that has made a big impression on me. Realistically, you do not necessarily take everything that your parents tell you seriously, but it has long been in my subconscious mind. Dad talked about how we live in different plains and the physical body is just how we come in and go out. He said that we have all been given an intellect that is not necessarily given to animals, so we are different. Obviously, animals can see, hear, smell, taste and touch, exactly like humans, but problems arise for humans when we live relying on our senses rather than our intellect, even though those are a beautiful part of our functionality.

The other space that we live in is this non-form, where our thoughts are gathered. You create your thoughts through your intellect and then you can turn them into actions. This is the whole idea about attitude that I would like to expand here.

Our attitude towards life, which will determine life's attitude towards us, is a particularly important thing that we need to understand and is something that Earl Nightingale talked about. At the time when we were growing up – Neil Armstrong went to the moon in 1967 and I was born in 1970 – Dad always used to talk about the will that individuals like Neil Armstrong had. The rocket that they sent to the moon was less powerful than the handheld devices that we all carry around with us today, so it was amazing.

Nightingale wrote that each of us shapes our own lives and that shape is determined by our attitude; the attitude that we hold most of the time. That sounds simple, but it is not easy. For most of us, learning to have the right attitude takes time, but once it is mastered, our daily lives will be transformed as if we are walking out of a dark tunnel into the bright, clear light of day.

At the moment, I am revisiting the writing of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who said things like, 'Let him learn the prudence of a higher strain; let him learn that everything in nature, even dust and feathers, go by law and not by luck.' My father used to say that, perhaps in quite different language, and often in Tamil, but the essence was the same.

My dad used to talk about the fact that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes. In virtually everything you read, people talk about human beings altering their lives by altering

their attitudes. I did not fully grasp that until recently, but I can now relate to it.

If we are to expand this idea further, we can expand by thinking about what attitude means. Dad used to talk about thoughts, feelings and actions and I now understand. My own research puts that nicely into a diagram, which was drawn by Dr Truman Fleet and explained in my previous book, *Thinking into Character*. We call it the stick person, and it shows how there are two types of mind: the conscious mind and the subconscious mind, and then the body, which is a function of the mind. What goes through the subconscious mind is completely deducted and then the body knows, and we have no way of stopping that and we go with the flow.

‘Our environment and the world we have created around us is really a mirror of our attitude,’ Nightingale said. If we do not like our environment, we can change it by changing our attitudes. The world keeps no favourites, it is impartial, and it is impersonal. It does not care who succeeds and who fails, nor does it care whether we change or not. Our attitude towards life does not affect the world and the people in it nearly as much as it affects us. My dad must have said this many, many times on many occasions when I was doing various things. When I was sad, he would tell me there was no point, because it would affect me more than others.

‘It would be impossible to underestimate the number of opportunities missed because of poor attitude,’ Nightingale said. That is a true reflection of what *The Power of Learning from DAD* is really helping me with. As I’m writing this chapter, I actually lost my

mother eight years ago to this day, on 28 April, 2012. As a child, my mum and dad were incredibly close to me and they gave me a hugely happy life in Sri Lanka before the war took all of that away. The poor attitudes of those wartime leaders meant many opportunities were missed.

My dad talked a lot about a good attitude coming from a positive outlook on life. If you have never tried it, you will be amazed at what happens. It is important to remember that actions are your feelings, and just as we feel, we act. Dad put a huge emphasis on that, and that is something that I have come to rely upon.

My dad read lots of philosophy and used to tell me that before you can do something, you must first *be* something. Some people just seem to always be successful. You think, ‘how is this happening and what can we learn?’ Dad used to tell me that if you consciously go about the test, you will see. The right attitude is to entertain positive mental thinking in your conscious mind. You impress upon your subconscious mind and then your body gives the action and the action then creates the reaction, which is the basis of success. That is the law of laws; the law of cause and effect. That is where attitude comes in and the result changes, your circumstances change, and you become a better, happier person.

Let me share some storytelling to illustrate the point.

Whenever there was any disagreement or argument between my mum and dad, Dad always took the attitude of not reacting. He would respond, but I never saw him get angry in my life. He was always incredibly calm, while mum was perhaps slightly fiery and would

get into arguments with him. But he was incredibly calm, he always looked at things in a vastly different way and it was very difficult to shake him. Any problems, any issues that arose, he was rock solid and would take it as it came and practically deal with a situation in the best possible way.

He always talked about reaction and response. I think I have heard that from Bob Proctor a couple of times. Bob and Dad were born in the same year, 1934. Now, when Bob teaches these things, I wish that I had listened more to what my father was saying. I didn't appreciate it, but now I can appreciate how valuable that teaching was. In particular, he talked about reacting and responding, and that if you react you are effectively losing control and allowing the other person to take control of you. But when you respond, you maintain control.

In one of the seminars in the United States, Bob said that and my heart leapt with happiness to hear my father's thoughts in that way; even though I was also a little disappointed with myself. Dad was saying that when I was a child, but I only appreciated it more recently,

So, individuals with a low level of consciousness react to conditions or circumstances. People with a high level of awareness respond. The higher the level of consciousness, the greater the awareness of the laws that govern this beautiful universe. It is absolutely a scientific basis. It is the law. You can agree or disagree, but things will happen based on your thoughts.

'Act towards others and the world at large in exactly the same manner that you want the world and others to act toward you,' Bob

Proctor said. Dad also said, many, many times, that we should always treat the members of our family as the people they really are, the most important people in our lives. And Nightingale said, 'Each morning, carry out into the world the kind of attitude you'd have if you were the most successful person on earth. Notice how quickly it develops into a habit. Almost immediately, you'll notice a change.'

There will be frustrations along the way and it all may disappear; it is incredibly hard. I am also still learning this material. I'm learning from what my dad said, but I am personally nowhere near perfection. I am just thinking about it.

Some less informed person will give you a bad time, but stay on track. When someone cuts in front of you in the car, have you reacted and got annoyed? Dad would ask, why are you getting to their level; don't permit yourself, don't let their unhappiness make you unhappy. What beautiful words. He would just drive and if people did things to him, nothing really bothered him. Mum used to say to him, 'do you ever get annoyed?' On the few occasions that I saw him irritated he would very quickly regain his composure.

Another story: I used to play cricket when I was younger, and I loved it. Obviously, the war and the unrest took away many of opportunities that we would normally have had at our age. But nevertheless, we would play these important matches, and Dad always told us just to make sure we practised, and then he talked about calming the mind and not doing anything. When you are walking on to the pitch, just think that you are the best batsman, never look at the bowler, only concentrate on the ball. He may be the best bowler and other people



are developing their own skills, but you need to concentrate on yourself rather than anybody else. That really taught me a huge lesson in terms of improving.

I have had the good fortune of speaking to various successful sports personalities, including cricketers, from all parts of the world. Most of them share this view and have the picture in their mind that they are the best. Thoughts become things. As Bob Proctor says, ‘If you can see it in your mind, you can hold it in your hand.’

And then the only reason you will get caught out is if for a moment you think you are not going to hit a run and the ball will hit the wicket or someone will catch it, and a moment of weakness comes. It is incredibly hard to practise and incredibly hard to learn, but that is where discipline comes in. Discipline is not someone telling you what to do, but about you giving yourself commands and following them. So, your discipline means making sure you do not think about anything except hitting the ball.

Then Dad talked about always thinking in a growth way. Consequently, I did a lot of research and was fortunate enough to meet Dr Carol Dweck from the University of Stanford. She has written a beautiful book called *Mindset – How You Can Fulfil Your Potential*. I would encourage you to read it. It talks about the growth mindset and the fixed mindset and Dad talked about that too, albeit in a very basic manner. The essence of what he said was the same as what Carol talked about – the growth mindset is about believing that you will always learn, you are willing to learn and you are not the best. The fixed mindset effectively says I am learned, I know it all. In fact, those

people with a growth mindset learn and succeed in their lives much, much more than those with a fixed mindset.

Some of these theories and practices, including the growth mindset idea, were taken on by Satya Nadella, the CEO of Microsoft. He took the company, at the time of writing this book, to be the second largest company in the world. Nadella says his thinking changed by reading Dr Carol Dweck's book and he took that to work and made a huge change.

These concepts are all out there, they are not new to this book, but it is especially important that people relate to these things in different ways. For me, I'm relating my studies over the past five or six years; I met Professor Clay Christensen and Clay said to me that I have to understand the laws of nature and the fact that man-made laws are not going to get me anywhere. That was when the whole thing started to come together, and then I lost Dad, and I started to figure out what I needed to do.

Dad also said the answers are all out there, we just need to ask the right questions. I believe that is an Oscar Wilde quote. It is vitally important – framing the question and discussing your opinion provides you with a huge amount of success, whatever it is you want to achieve.

So, in terms of other stories that relate to attitude: my dad lost his parents and he was incredibly close to them, so at that time his emotions were raw. He was not necessarily that emotional – I could understand, because when I lost him, I was devastated for most of a year. Nevertheless, I think he was able to appreciate this conscious message that this body is just a piece of molecular structure, something comes in for a life and then it goes out.

He loved his mother so much and then we became refugees and left Sri Lanka. We were in Vancouver, Canada, that particular year when grandmother passed away. However, as refugees, we were scared to go back to the country where we were born at that time and so he couldn't return. He waited until she was cremated and literally meditated at the side of the room. It was quite interesting to see the way he dealt with it. The next morning, he showered and came back and kept going. It's amazing how he dealt with that and his attitude was always, always positive.

I just want to highlight one or two things. First, we must always make sure our thoughts are constructive and positive. Look for the best thoughts and ideas; be constantly alert for new ideas you can put into life. He was always positive and looked for the positive in people. He often repeated the popular saying of not considering a glass to be half empty, but half full. That is something now embedded into my psyche. I used to use it all the time when I was younger and I still use it, not always, because it is still in my conscious mind, but I am developing, and I am improving every time. When I look at something and I get a fixed mindset or a negative idea, I tell myself to shift to the other side. Clearly this is something he was thinking and explaining to us a long time ago.

Dad said, 'Do not waste time talking about your problems unless you are talking to a medical doctor.' He had never been to a medical doctor. He died at almost 72 and had never been to a doctor, because he did not bother. It probably will not help you, he thought. He talked about this idea of not wasting time talking about your problems. He said something that sticks with me, 'Do not worry until

the worry worries you.’ He used to say it in the local language, in Tamil, but the essence of it was do not look for the problem, look for solutions. If you think about problems, talk about problems, you will be continuously trapped in problems. He just radiated an attitude of wellbeing and confidence.

Treat everyone as the most important person, as I have said before. Once you start this habit, practise it consistently. I am desperately studying these things every day and putting these things into practice and putting them into my subconscious mind to create a life-changing experience. It is going to help for the rest of my life. By writing *The Power of Learning from DAD*, I believe this is going to help lots of sons and daughters when they pick up the book and read it. It is a story; it is not necessarily lots of facts and figures, but I’m relaying a story and perhaps readers will be able to better relate to their dads, whether they are still alive or not.

I believe also that fathers will pick up this book and read it and perhaps be inspired to share their thoughts more. Dad never wrote down any of his philosophies or beliefs – everything I am talking about here is from my memory – but I’m putting this out there for our daughters. Hopefully it will help them, and it will help lots of other people.

Dad said life is all about giving, and that is not always financial; it is about giving knowledge and experience and helping people think differently. As long as what you give is coming from a position of helping others rather than expecting something back in material rewards, that is what life is about. If it is premeditated and you are

motivated by what you are going to get in return, that will fail because the laws of nature are based on the principle of harmony of thoughts, feelings and actions. If you genuinely give from a positive mental attitude standpoint, with a growth mindset, then nature must by law give back what you are seeking.

Just to finish off, all that a man or woman achieves and all that he or she fails to achieve, is a direct result of his or her inner thoughts. Adjusting and ordering our thinking in certain ways can achieve what we want. A man or a woman's weakness and strength, purity and impurity are his or hers, they do not belong to others. It is about his or her self, and can only be altered by themselves and no one else. Suffering and happiness are evolved from within. This was beautifully put by James Allen in his book *As A Man Thinketh*. Allen also said, 'He thinks, so he is. As he continues to think, so he remains.' Dad said that in a different way, and that is enormously powerful in summing up the power of attitudes.

## CHAPTER 3

### DECISION

**D**ad always talked a lot about decision. In fact, he talked about procrastination, which he described as the common enemy of decision. When we procrastinate, we do not make decisions – we delay. Napoleon Hill also talked about this, and observed that any human being that has achieved anything in their lives has always had the ability to make decisions. When you analyse the many men and women who have experienced failure, lack of decision was nearly always one of the list of major causes of that failure.

You can test this by thinking about, and looking into, how quickly we make decisions and what impact this has. Hill said that an analysis of many thousands of people who have been successful way beyond their initial imaginations, shows they have a habit of making decisions promptly and changing decisions slowly when it becomes necessary. People who fail to successfully achieve their goals have the habit of reaching decisions very slowly, if at all, and then changing decisions

very quickly. As soon as something goes wrong, bang, they just scurry to their old habits.

So, it is an important concept. If we look back at history, there are many leaders that we can point to who were renowned for successfully navigating decision-making.

One thing that Covid-19 has taught me, with all its challenge and uncertainty, is that you need to stop to make a decision, even though the world does not stop moving. You have got to take time to stop, unload the baggage, and then give some serious thought to making decisions.

I believe that I have made some fantastic decisions during the course of lockdown – for myself, for the business and for the organisation. Now, I look back and ask how I was able to do that, and I think that stopping for a moment allowed me to make decisions with a clear mind. Dad used to say, when you stop and look at yourself, reflect upon the result rather than the problem; it is like turning on a light in a dark room.

Most people who fail to succeed experience problems because they are too heavily influenced by other people's opinions. They permit newspapers, gossips or neighbours to be their thinking. 'Opinions are the cheapest commodities on earth,' Dad always said, echoing Hill's words. Do listen to people, do respect people, and when they are telling you something, appreciate that they are effectively giving you their opinion. That is okay – there are many people who truly have your best interests at heart – but it is their opinion. And Hill wrote that everyone has a flock of opinions ready to be thrust upon anyone who

will accept them. If you are influenced by the opinions of others, when you reach decisions you will not succeed, much less translate your own desire into success.

If we allow the opinions of others to influence too much, we lose focus on our own desire, passion and purpose to achieve – the elements key to success that we noted about Desire in Chapter 1. It is important to have good advisers and mentors: For me, Bob, Clay and my father have all been great mentors. In fact, I started to take on board a lot more insight from my dad after he had departed, so mentors do not necessarily have to be there in front of you. We can recollect and process information they have told us that perhaps we did not appreciate at the time.

‘When you are making decisions, you have got to be on a moral compass and make sure you are working within your values and your purpose. If you are,’ Dad always said, ‘go ahead and make a decision.’

When it came to our education business, which we started together, any time we had to make a difficult decision Dad said, ‘There is so much information around you but you cannot know the future.’ By the same principle, during the Covid-19 lockdown, Regent has launched its EdTech business – Regent Digital.

In decisions, the most important thing to remember is that you cannot make a decision based on what has happened, because what has happened is history. Looking at the results of what has happened before and then making a decision is not necessarily the right approach.

Dad said it is simple; first ask the question, get your mind ready,



and then go back to your purpose. Our purpose was quite simple; the end result of education is character. So, when you are in the space and you are looking at a particular decision that you need to make, you really need to ask the question: Is it good, proper, lawful and moral for your students? If it is the right thing to do, just go ahead and do it.

Students are everything to us. Education is a noble profession and students come to us, trusting us to enhance their knowledge – we are their custodians. Dad said, ‘Do not worry about who is in front of you, just accept that they may have a different opinion to yours. That is not the point, you have got to make a committed decision and get to work.’ That stayed with me and I use that regularly.

You cannot make decisions based on what has happened just as you cannot make decisions based on current results, because if you work with the current results, that only reflects your previous thinking from the past. If you just want to tinker and improve, it does not work; you will get the same results over and over again. What you really need to do is say that was okay, that is the past, I’m not going to think about that and I am not going to base my future positions on that. You can learn from the past and learn from mistakes to inform your future position, that is the beautiful thing.

But what we are really talking about is looking at what you want to achieve – the starting point, the idea. From there, you evolve that idea, build from there and enjoy that experience. Your feelings will change and as your feelings change, then you will get into action. We know from research that when these feelings move into the subconscious

mind, it is impossible to stop them. This approach produces results and then you look into the results and ask whether you like the results. If you do not, then you say that your previous thoughts and actions got you to here but move forward and figure out your next goal.

Dad always said that your close friends and relatives – while not meaning to – often hold you back when they offer their opinions. Sometimes because of those views, which are meant to be humorous, thousands of men and women carry an inferiority complex. I know I used to. All through my life, well-meaning, but ignorant people have destroyed my confidence through opinions. Since I was a child, I was constantly given advice to look after my body weight. It still bothers me, and I am still working on it; it is easy to see where I need to get to, but extremely hard to practise.

We have a brain and a mind of our own, so let us use it and reach our own decisions. Hill said that if we seek facts or information from other people to enable us to reach decisions, we should go and acquire those facts and secure the information, without necessarily amplifying what we are doing. You have got to talk to people, talk to your close teams, talk to your trusted advisers and seek out people who will genuinely provide another point of view. It is normal for people to gather input and do research, but those that tend not to be successful often talk too much and take remarkably little action.

Keep your eyes and ears open. Dad used to say, in a very crude way, ‘You have two ears, two eyes, and only one mouth. Think in mathematical terms and use them in a proportionate manner.’ He was working with various people – our family comes from farms in

Sri Lanka, and we were associated with various property projects, so Dad was dealing with people at a senior level; CEOs of companies, while also working with people from the bottom up – the labourers and others on the building sites. The only way he was able to relate to them was to give these examples. Are you using your mouth, ears and eyes proportionately, or are you using your mouth more?

Those who talk too much deprive themselves of opportunities, as well as unnecessarily talking about things within themselves that they may be imagining. It is important that our imagination gets more weight, power and knowledge before it goes out. In reality, it is incredibly important to have an incubation period.

Remember also that every time you open your mouth in the presence of a person who has an abundance of knowledge, you display to that person your exact stock of knowledge, or lack of it. This is something that Hill highlighted. He said that genuine wisdom is usually demonstrated through modesty, silence and calmness. Keep in mind the fact that every person with whom you associate is like yourself. Treat people in the sense that they are, like you, seeking the opportunity to be successful. Help them. If you talk about your plans, if it comes from your heart, if it is going to help the other person, do help them, and then get into action.

Dad said you should keep a closed mouth and open ears and eyes and use your intellectual factors to achieve more of your goals, desires and dreams.

Throughout this book and throughout my life with Dad, one key theme is that we become what we think about. Bob Proctor puts that

very eloquently in his own work and Dad said that many times. It should be backed up by our desire, which has a tendency to transmute itself into reality. The thought makes this astonishing transformation, and then the thought drives our decision.

Dad said that we should not look for miracles, as there is no such thing, just the laws of nature, which can be extraordinarily powerful. They may be used to bring freedom to nations – think about Mahatma Gandhi, one man who literally challenged the whole British Empire and achieved India’s freedom. Bringing freedom to a nation comes from your imagination, your ability, your faith, your courage and your desire, all of which are needed to become successful. If you look at Nelson Mandela it is exactly the same story, and if you look at every great man or woman who has made history.

These individuals do not have a particular degree from Stanford or Harvard, Oxford or Cambridge. There are so many people who have got those degrees who are hardly known in history. And there are so many people who are known and have not got those. I am not saying those degrees are not valuable, absolutely they are, and I would encourage everybody to go and study at good universities because that is where our passion lies, we are in education.

But what I am saying is not to confuse the matter – just getting a good academic qualification does not mean you are going to make good decisions. We learn decision-making in various financial programmes and MBAs, but all we are learning are mathematical models. Then we talk about the qualitative factors of decision-making, which again are theoretical. True decision-making is very much an

internal mechanism. This is where our idea of education heavily promotes inside-out education. The understanding of how our DNA, our environment and our mind can formulate a dynamic learning culture also fits nicely with the idea of lifelong learning.

Being decisive is something you learn when you are young and develop as you mature. We build a definitive purpose; if we do not have purpose, how can we make decisions? If people cannot tell you straight away what their purpose is, you know they have not thought about it and they are not working through it. How do they then make decisions?

One weakness of many of the world's educational systems is that they overlook the importance of decision-making. They talk about models, they talk about various ways of doing it, but our alternative inside-out education spends a lot of time on knowing and doing. It comes to the fundamentals of doing.

If you have a section in your degree or MBA about decision-making, and indeed when I did my Chartered Accountancy qualification there was a section on decision-making, you cover complex financial models, net present values and IRRs. That is all valuable, but here we are talking about the ability to make sensible, definite decisions.

It would be much better if colleges did not let students enrol until they were clear on their reasons for wanting to enrol. Why do you want to do it? Even better, every student should start out with the habit of making decisions.

The habit of indecision comes from a deficiency in the early

schooling system, and also from so-called career advisers at school. The people giving that advice have often never been in those careers at all. Therefore, all they are sharing is their opinion. Individuals need to make their own decisions based on the right information.

Decisiveness requires courage, and sometimes a lot of courage. Saying you are going to change things fundamentally and taking on the status quo can be terrifying. But people do make that decision. As long as it's lawful and purpose, values and morals are there, then go and do it – do not worry about the outcome, just get on and do it.

As I deal with decision, it is also important to think about the planning aspect, which we will revisit further in subsequent chapters. Dad said that the greatest joy of a human being is the joy of accomplishment, and accomplishments come from making committed decisions.

Do you know how great this joy becomes when you are making constant decisions, growing your mind, your talent and your abilities? It's a process, like learning music – if you want to become good at it, you must practise over and over again. If you look at sports personalities, they do things over and over again.

Dad used to say we should think of life as the perfect ground to be seeded. It can only return to you if you first give to it by making definitive decisions. What do you give in the way that you think? This is where decision is related to the human psychology, the greatest single agency ever to appear on earth. Dad said, 'You have far more abilities than you have ever used, and you have got a reservoir of talent, but you have got to develop it, you have far more talent than you can probably imagine.'

You also have time – the one thing that is completely beyond the control of all of us. Time, which cannot be saved, stopped or held back for even an instant. You don't manage time; you only manage activities. So, when you are making decisions, you really need to understand the concepts and develop your intellectual faculties, but the most important thing to use in making those decisions is your intuition.

You are making decisions based on what is going to happen in the future, and you do not know exactly what the future is going to be. While I am writing this book, the whole world is going through the Covid-19 global health crisis. Even just weeks previously, we did not know the world would come to a standstill. How do you make decisions if you are running an organisation and making investments when faced with these kinds of eventualities? You have got to believe and make decisions with conviction and purpose, then you will be able to make things happen.

Dad said we should make use of these riches while you have them. Why wait? There is no second chance. Make a decision now if you want to do something. Use truth as your guide and your achievements will return in abundance if you make sensible, committed decisions. There will always be bad days when you feel things are not working – that's part of life, he said. And he said you should not worry until the worry worries you. If things appear to go wrong, continue to work and just enjoy it. Take the fun, do your work and the skies will clear.

Making decisions and taking action are an important part of life. To bring us to a conclusion, consider that making decisions is very much

linked to intuition. Intuition comes as a human intellectual factor and is given to us when we are born. But it needs to be developed and you can only develop intuition by understanding who you are and how and why you are doing things. If you just make decisions with your sensory factors, the current thinking is that – and I am not necessarily saying this is completely right or wrong – you are making decisions simply in the way that animals make them. What we are really talking about here is making decisions about the future, making decisions about what the world is going to look like.

It is so important to develop our mental faculties – our perception, our point of view, our will and our ability to think about something and then make a decision. Imagination is crucial because if you do not have the imagination, how do you then construct a decision? And also reason – ultimately this all fits into your intuition. Intuition is so, so critical and we can develop it for ourselves. There are ways and means of developing intuition, but it will not develop itself.

As Steve Jobs once said, ‘Have the courage to follow your heart.’ Make your decisions based on intuition. He always said you can never connect the dots looking forward, but you can always connect the dots looking backwards. But your dots will definitely connect in the future if you have a desire and a purpose and you are making committed decisions. Then suddenly the laws of nature will get you to where you want to get to.

This is an incredibly useful lesson and you will find a lot of information available to help you develop your own skills in making definite, purposeful decisions. Every time you face a decision, you need to return to the idea of your over-arching purpose.



# CHAPTER 4

## ACTION

When it comes to action, Dad always said that when you have a great thought, a great idea, do not think about it and when you can start. Obviously, develop a clear mental picture of what you want, but then the first thing you need to do is get to work and get into action. By not getting into action, none of your ideas will turn into results. A lot of academic professionals create great ideas but do nothing about them because they do not take effective action.

The Tamil word for father is Appa, and I think of that word as an acronym, beginning with Attitude and ending with Action, wrapped around two Ps for Persistence and Planning.

Dad said, 'Have an idea, think about it, dream about it, and then you must take effective action.' You must use your thoughts as directed; that is so important. You need to do what you can do, where you are, and you must do all that you can do, where you are.

You can only advance by doing larger than your present life. No one is larger than their present place if they leave aside any of the work pertaining to that place. He talked about these ideas of being in a larger, better place, which means we actually do more than we currently do, to push ourselves forward.

Only those who more than fill their present places advance in the world. If no one quite fills his present place, you can see that there must be a going backward, because the world is not constantly staying in one place, it is moving. When I started this chapter, the world and my body and everything was in one place, and now it is in a vastly different place, after a few minutes, a few days, or weeks.

Those who do not quite fill their present places are dead weight, Dad used to say, just a cargo upon society, government and the wider world. ‘If you are in a ship,’ he always said, ‘be part of the crew and never be part of the cargo.’ Because when things go wrong, the first overboard will be the cargo and not the crew. ‘Within the crew,’ he always said, ‘if you take effective action you will be the last person that ends up in the sea.’

If people are cargo, then others must carry them along at great expense, that is the problem. Dad said that if you’re not taking effective action, if you are only doing certain things, you are not only doing harm to yourself but you are actually harming others, because you are not helping the wider world and your community. Only those who do not fill their places are slowing progress of the world; no society could advance if everyone was smaller than his place.

Physics, psychology and mental evolution have helped social

evolution. In the animal world, evolution is caused by excess of life, when an organism has more life than can be expressed in the function of its own plain. In that case, it develops the organs of a higher plain and a new species originates. That's the evolution of life – there would never have been new species if there had not been species that more than filled their places. What we are really saying is that growing and seeking more is what triggers an effective action. And if you do not take action, you cannot progress.

The law is exactly the same for everybody. Dad talked about laws and philosophies, and Bob Proctor talks about natural laws. Stephen Covey talks about principles and the late Clay Christensen also talked about nature. They are all talking about the same thing; and Earl Nightingale, the universal law... it was always like this and it will always be like this in the future. That is what Dad talked about. He said these laws are exactly the same for us all. Applying these laws, principles and concepts is mighty. Every day is either a successful day or a day of failure.

Every day I would get up and say good morning, and Dad would say, 'Son, today will either be a successful day or a day of failure. But the successful day depends on your actions, so what actions are you going to take? If every day is a success, your life will be successful.'

The consequences of ineffective action may be more disastrous than you might imagine. You might think it is only one unsuccessful day, but that's not the point. You keep on doing that for a period and the consequences will be devastating. Human life has got significant meaning attached to it and a huge reservoir of potential. If you do not take action, you are not going to make it work.

You cannot foresee the results of even the most trivial acts. You do not know the workings of all the forces set in motion. If you have this great idea and you want to achieve certain things, if you are not taking action, the world cannot react. The basic physics are that if you give and take action, there will be reaction. Those reactions will change your results, circumstances and conditions. Your future may depend on you doing something, and that may be the very thing that will open the door to opportunity. There are many great possibilities – Dad always said that.

Another thing he said was that the cave you believe will give you all the problems that you fear, is effectively where the riches await you. Whenever I was telling Dad I didn't want to do something or I was not ready, he told this story. However, he never said go and do it, he always said make up your own mind.

He used to remind me of the time in Sri Lanka during the war, when my parents wanted me to become a medical doctor. I wanted it as well because I didn't see anything else in Sri Lanka. There was a mass motivation, because you see everyone around you doing that, you are doing well in your education, so everyone thinks that is what you are going to do. That is all we knew; we did not appreciate that the world had so many other professions.

To a certain extent, it was ignorance. You should take action only based on what you want to do, and not based on the opinions of others, to make use of your desire. But nevertheless, that is what I wanted to do and then the war became really, really difficult. This was in 1989 and I could not do my advanced level exams for various

reasons. Then in 1990 I said, ‘Dad, I just need to get out of this, and I want to go to the United Kingdom and seek a life. I want to study there and make the United Kingdom my home.’ I was absolutely clear on that. I landed in the UK with £100 as a student and subsequently became a refugee of this country; this country gave me everything and I absolutely made an effective action to move; I’m so glad Dad supported me in making that decision.

You can never know all the combinations that supreme power or nature are making for you in the world. You never know and you cannot speculate. Dad always said that neglect or failure to do small things may cause a long delay in getting what you want. If you neglect something and then look for results, the results will not be forthcoming, because you have not taken action.

Do every day all that can be done that day. Do what you can, today is the wonderful day. But there is a qualification that you must take into account: you must not overwork. My dad was very relaxed – he said you should not rush about your business in an effort to do the greatest possible number of things in the shortest possible time. He said just relax, just do what is needed, do not do what is tomorrow. Being in control is being relaxed.

You are not to try to do tomorrow’s work today, he said. Never try to do a week’s worth in a day. It is not the number of things you do but the efficiency of each separate action that counts.

I will tell another story here. After coming to the United Kingdom, I started my accountancy studies and when I was in the final stages I decided to take a job for financial reasons. Mum and Dad had

joined me, so I needed to work. So, during my final exams, which was a remarkably busy year, I was working for Prudential, the largest insurance company in the world. For that I was incredibly grateful. The problem was that I was not necessarily doing enough studying – I was concentrating on my career.

So, when it came to my final exams I hardly studied, even though I was attending the classes. As the exams approached, I told Dad that I had not really studied a lot and maybe I should defer the exam. He thought about it, and then said – a week before the exam, ‘Do what you can every day.’

There was a big project going on at Prudential at the time, and advised me just to do the revision I had time to do. To be honest, I did not revise. I just went back to work and neglected study. The day before the exam, I told him I might defer it. He said I should instead try, to take action. So reluctantly I decided to go in because I had nothing to lose.

I sat the papers on the Monday and it all went very well. In those two papers I got my confidence back. I came home and said I had done well, so then I started studying hard for the next exam, which was on the Wednesday. But Dad told me to relax and he offered me a nice Scotch, something he and I enjoyed occasionally. He told me not to look at my book, and said that one day recovering from the previous day’s endeavours and being relaxed and calm would do me good. That was something I did not expect, but I took his advice and didn’t do anything. Then I went back on the Wednesday and did the next exam and, guess what, I did well.

It is absolutely incredible that in the last stages of my exams I didn't study, but I went on to qualify. On the day before the exam I did not even touch my books. I am not suggesting students do that, but it's an interesting story and obviously the huge aspects of learning that I had done before, and the work I was doing at Prudential, all helped. This proves that it is not only the theoretical knowledge that matters, but also practical knowledge and the ability to control the mind. I am grateful to my dad and I am also grateful to both my wonderful employer, Prudential, and my great boss, Finance Director Ian Baker, who I am still working with as he sits on our Advisory Board.

Every act is, in itself, either a success or a failure. Every act is an act of either effective and efficient action or is ineffective or inefficient. Every inefficient act is a failure. If you spend a lot of time doing an inefficient act, you will fail. If all your acts are inefficient, you know what will happen. On the other hand, every efficient act is a success in itself. If every act of your life is an efficient one, your whole life must be successful; it is simple logic. The cause of failure is doing too many things in an inefficient manner and not doing enough things efficiently. Dad always said you must just do one or two things properly rather than doing hundreds of things improperly.

It is a self-evident proposition that if you do no inefficient acts and a great deal of efficient acts, you will become successful and achieve your goals. If it is possible for you to make each act an efficient one, you will see a gain by becoming successful. Go back to those principles, that is what *The Power of Learning from DAD* is all about.

What I'm really talking about is how you achieve what you want to achieve. I may not have quite understood everything when my

father first told me these things, but now I am studying the materials and I'm relating what Dad said in very layman terms, to the scientific research, psychology and neuroscience; and these explore and discuss the concepts that Dad told me about.

The matter turns, then, to the question of whether you can make each separate act a success in itself. If we can each act successfully, then we will be successful. This can certainly be done. You can make each act successful because all power is working with you. Dad said you have an enormous amount of power. 'Power is at your service,' he said, 'and it will not allow you to fail. You have it, so why do you not use it? And to make each act efficient, you have only to put power behind it. Power is critical. Every action is either a strong or a weak one, and if every action is strong, you are acting in a certain way that will make you successful.'

He used to say that every act can be made strong and efficient by holding your vision, purpose and values while you are doing it; putting your whole power – every cell of your body, into it. But he also stressed that you must believe, because he had a huge amount of faith in the purpose of everything. He had complete faith that we would achieve what we set out to achieve, and his thinking very much echoes the words of Clay Christensen and others.

It is at this point that the people who separate mental power from personal action fail. This is an important point. You can have lots of ideas, but if you do not take personal action, you will fail. You need to use the power of mind and ability in both ideas and action. Do not act in another place, in another time, in another way, so that your acts are not successful in themselves. Do not let your actions be inefficient.



If all power goes into every act, then no matter how commonplace, every act will be a success in itself. It is common sense. Going back to my cricket days, if I was going for a difficult match and I came in for lunch and it looked like we were not going to make it, then Dad would say – especially if I was batting – just get out there and stay on the crease, concentrate and take action for every ball that comes to you. That is it. Do not think about the next ball and do not think about the ball that went behind you because you cannot do anything about those. Just concentrate and take action. Concentration is key, as is will power.

Since it is the nature of things that every success opens the way to further success. And returning to the cricket analogy; if I get some runs, I will take some more runs. Progress towards what you want, and the progress of what you want towards you, may become increasingly erratic, but remember that action brings humility in its results.

Since the desire for more life is inherent, when a person begins to work towards larger life, more things attach themselves to them. An example is when you do good things, which Dad was exceptionally good at, because he would love to give food to people. One of his actions every day was to give food to others. He would share his food and he would cook food – not just for people who were struggling, but for everyone. There are so many examples and when people read this book, and there are so many who will remember my dad, whatever their relationship was with him, for providing food. He got joy out of it. If a woman was pregnant, he would cook food and give it to them. He took action and every day he would do something.

‘If you want to see speedy results,’ he said, ‘spend practically all your time in this practice – it is as simple as that.’ If you really want the results quick, all you have got to do is give every moment of your time. Through continuous contemplation, you will get the picture. ‘Be patient,’ he said... ‘it will sometimes take time, but you will get it.’ He was really patient and really calm and he used to tell me that calmness of mind is the greatest gift you can have. Just stay relaxed, be calm, and things will be attracted.

So, be firmly fixed on your wish, completely transfer it to the mind, and then things will happen. ‘It is like magic sometimes,’ he said, ‘that in your working hours, you need only to mentally refer to the picture to assimilate your faith in the process.’ On working hours, Dad worked 24/7 and he took actions 24/7. He was working even the day before he passed away, at the age of 72. It was a hot day in July, and he gave ice cream to everyone before he closed the office with my trusted assistant, Alka Tailor. The next day he went to the beach and he never came back. But he was doing what he loved, swimming in the sea.

My mum also told me that when he went with my cousins to the beach that day, he got up that morning to cook and prepare food for my cousins – about 20 of them. I did not go because my daughter did not want to go that day, she felt a little bit poorly. So, I stayed. I regret not going, but everything happens for a reason, everything is based on action-reaction. I fully see now that we are formed of substance and spirit and in 2006, on 23 July, Dad’s spirit went away.

His departure was an emotional shock for me, and my life has

changed in many, many ways. I started to seek meaning in what life is about and I began to study. He always said, ‘The things that I am telling you now, some you will understand now and some you will not understand and may not understand even by the time you are about to go.’ That was quite profound, and perhaps there are things that I still do not understand.

One thing that he did not believe in was saving money – he said it is a flow, it will come, it will go. He always said that by giving, you will get back. In Tamil, his name was Selvanayagam and Selvam means wealth. He always said, ‘I do not know if I have wealth or not, but everyone calls me wealth.’ And he was wealthy, he had a fantastic life. From an incredibly young age, I lived in opulence; my parents gave me everything – we had a fantastic life and never felt that we couldn’t achieve anything. We got everything: we liked a car, we bought it; we liked a suit, we bought it. So, it was in abundance, but he just never had any money in his deposit account, he just believed it would come. I could not fully share that and even today, in 2020, I’m learning, but I can’t grasp that. And this comes back to his idea that I might not grasp everything he ever said to me.

To bring this chapter to a close, Dad said that I would become so enthused with bright promises that the mere thought of them would call forth the strongest energies of my whole being. And certainly there is this thinking from which everything is made, which from its original state and using various means, penetrates life. A person can form things in thought and in pressing this thought upon the subconscious mind, can cause the thing he thinks about to be created.

But it will not be created without action. The key is action. In order to achieve, a person must pass from inaction to action. Finally, Dad always said, please do not compete with anybody. If you want to compete, compete with yourself. But you should always be creating. You can create your own path, but do not compete with anyone, because competition is a game. At some point our education system created this culture of competition, but you do not need to compete.

He also said that having faith and purpose is critical. All that can be done each day, do that; that is the best way to sum up effective action.

# CHAPTER 5

## GRATITUDE

**L**et me begin this chapter with something that my dad told me every single day. It was to count my blessings – and I think that perfectly illustrates what we are going to talk about in this chapter.

If you really want to achieve your dreams, in addition to taking your daily action, it is especially important to understand the concept of gratitude. To do so, it is necessary to relate yourself to the laws of nature, the formless substance that many thinkers have coined different names for.

Stephen Covey talks about principles, and Clay Christensen talks about nature. Bob talks about the laws of nature, and Dad talked about values and this non-form, which we need to be in a harmonious relationship with.

The whole process of mental adjustment can be summed up in one word, gratitude. In this chapter, I will draw a lot on the writing of

Wallace D Wattles about gratitude, as well as what my dad taught me. Wattles said that first you believe that there is one intelligent unknown, nature for us to be in a harmonious relationship with, from which everything proceeds. Second, you believe that this nature gives you everything you desire. Nature wants to give to you. Third, you relate yourself to it by a feeling of deep and profound gratitude. That is the absolute importance in this chapter and is something Dad talked about often.

Dad always said that there are so many people who have received; perhaps a gift for their desire and for their action, so they cut the wires. They just believe that they do not need to have gratitude for what they have achieved, so they fail to make that acknowledgement of nature. But making that acknowledgement, having that connection, and then deeply feeling that gratitude is critical – not just simply saying thank you very much, but deeply feeling that gratitude in every cell of your body. That is the bit that nature will absorb and understand, not just mere words without any feelings or emotions.

It is easy to understand that the closer we live to the laws of nature, the more success we will achieve. It is easy also to understand that we have a physical body and we are a non-form object; we can call it a spiritual object, and we have intellect as human beings. We are living on three plains: physical, intellect and that non-form, spiritual plain. Using our intellect, we can tap into that non-form, and that is effectively thinking.

‘The more gratefully we fix our minds on this nature, the more good things we will receive and the more rapidly they will come,’ Wattles said. Dad used to say that it is like a flood; be grateful for

whatever you have. He always said we should think about the people behind us, who are perhaps unable to achieve, and do not complain. He never complained in his 72 years. Whatever happened to him, he believed it was meant to happen as a result of the laws of nature and action and its reaction. ‘Just take it as it is, harness the good and look at the positives, rather than continuously whinging about things,’ he said.

I used to be bad at this – I always complained about things not working. That is when he said, ‘Do not worry until the worry worries you.’ And then he would say to count my blessings. That mantra – to count my blessings, is embedded in my subconscious mind now, even though I did not initially quite understand it and I made him say it many times. Now, I do understand but am still learning every day.

Gratitude brings your whole mind into closer harmony with nature. Just consider it, please do not reject it. Dad used to say, when new ideas come to you, do not necessarily accept them, but please also do not reject them. Do not jump to a conclusion – do not say that won’t work or focus on the negatives, just consider the idea.

As human beings, we have a huge tendency to reject new ideas, completely shutting down and going into the negative plain, rather than going into the positive plain and actively considering things. That is an incredibly valuable thing to learn. If a new idea comes to us, we do not need to accept it, because it may or may not be in harmony with our purpose, our goals or what we want to achieve, but we must consider it.

Take it into your conscious mind and analyse it before rejecting it. If you want to take it forward, that is when you move it to your

subconscious mind, where you attach your feelings, your emotions and you get engaged in that idea and the rest is perfect action – reaction: You take action and you will get reaction because that is the laws of nature.

If we do not necessarily believe in that, then we must really ask ourselves whether we believe in gravity, or in friction. Those physics concepts are just concepts – you cannot see them, but experience proves that they exist. This is the same thing and Dad has proven it to me.

The good things you have already come to you because of the laws of nature. Gratitude will keep you in creative thought and prevent you from falling into competitive thought.

It is incredibly important, and Dad told me many times, ‘Mahan (son in Tamil), you really need to understand, there is a law of gratitude and you must observe that law to succeed.’

The grateful outreaching of your mind in thankful praise to nature is a liberation or expenditure of force. These are beautiful ideas from Wattles and we really need to understand them. Dad really articulated that to me in quite a simple way – just making me and my mum, and our entire family, accept that whatever we have is precious and to be treasured. In every difficult moment that he faced, any problem that he came to, he would just say that everything happens for good reason and accept it. He would never react.

He used to tell a story that is worth retelling; about a king and his adviser. One day the king went hunting with his adviser in the



jungle. During the hunt, the king lost one of his fingers. On returning to the palace, the king was whinging about how he had lost his finger and how awful it all was. The adviser listened carefully and said, ‘Everything for good, your Royal Highness.’ The king was really cross, and replied, ‘What could possibly be good, I have lost my finger!’ He put the adviser in the prison.

Months and years passed with the poor adviser in the prison. The king went back to the jungle to hunt and on this occasion was caught by a tribe that was going to kill him as part of a ritual. They were just about to kill him when they realised that he did not have a complete body, so according to their ritual, the king could not be killed. The king rushed back to the palace, told the queen what had happened, and freed the adviser. The adviser had told him many years ago that everything is for good, and in fact, had the king not lost his finger, he would not have lived. So that fits in nicely with this chapter – everything happens for a reason, harvest the good and take action.

In the context of gratitude, because gratitude is about being able to accept and learn every day, let me finish off the story. The adviser was released, and the king apologised and told him what a fantastic adviser he was. Then the adviser said, ‘Again, everything for good, your Royal Highness.’ The king again got a bit annoyed and asked what he was talking about this time. And the adviser said, ‘Think about it, usually I come hunting with you. If I had come today, they would have killed me, because I have a complete body.’

If your gratitude is strong and constant, the reaction in nature will be strong and continuous. The movement of the things you want

will be always towards you. Notice with great gratitude is something that Bob Proctor also talked about. He always said to keep a gratitude journal, think about it all the time, to keep track of the things that you are grateful for. My feeling on writing gratitude journals is that keeping track of your gratitude must be combined with emotions. I come from a Hindu background and we were taught to recite our gratitude as mantras. But if someone asked me whether I understood them, the answer was no, because we just repeated ourselves.

These mantras are incredibly valuable and connect you to nature, but if you don't understand them – if you have blind faith, you are not going to be able to relate. So, an understanding is important, and understanding will only come through study. Not just memorising things, but intelligence, which now the world is accepting as emotional intelligence. The intellectual intelligence – the IQ, is important, but emotional intelligence – the EQ, turns your knowledge into action, turns your knowing into doing.

Notice that the grateful attitude that we have will take us wherever we want to go. You cannot exercise much power without gratitude, Dad said. If you think you are going to achieve whatever you want to achieve, and if you think you are achieving success, it may be temporary. You are not going to get long-term success. It is gratitude that keeps you connected with nature, but the value of gratitude does not exist solely in getting you more and more. That is not the purpose. It is about the growth; it is about where you are and how you are going to grow from it. It is not about material possessions or just any success.

We need to remember how we define success. Success is the

progressive realisation of a worthy goal. As long as it is worthy, as long as you are taking action every day, as long as you know exactly where you want to go, as long as you have gratitude every day and a purpose and a value, you will get there; this is physics. However, having gratitude is not just about getting more.

The minute your mind starts to dwell on dissatisfaction, you must make it focus on gratitude. This is quite timely because I am writing this book in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown and everything appears to be going to go down. What goes up, must come down. It is nature. But if you start to feel negative, then straight away you need to say no and instead feel gratitude. You must bring it back, but to do that, you need to some tools.

These are the tools. In my previous publication I talked about *Thinking into Character*, and there is a set of tools there for how you do this. If you think without clarity, if you think with fear, if you entertain that negativity – guess what, that becomes the goal and you naturally attract it. At the same time, if you have positive thinking, a growth mindset, as Dr Carol Dweck at Stanford has called it, then you are in a quite different position. Then you attract success.

Again, it comes back to nature. Think about a magnet. A magnet only attracts what it attracts, the metal. It cannot attract plastic. It is the same for people. You attract the right things into your life if you are in the right frame of mind, and you will also repel various people or processes. That is okay because that is not your fault, you hold a positive mentality and these things happen. Never, ever have any anger or resentment towards other people. If your action, while

you are operating in the law of harmony, repels people, then that is meant to happen, just like the magnet.

‘To permit your mind to dwell upon the inferior is to become inferior and to surround yourself with inferior things,’ Wattles wrote. On the other hand, to fix your attention on the best is to surround yourself with the best and to become the best. The creative power within us makes us into the image of that to which we give our attention. We can achieve. Dad said, ‘Never, ever compete; always create.’ Only people who do not have the right mindset compete. We all must create.

So, we can think, and what we think, we can create. ‘The grateful mind is constantly fixed on the best; therefore, it tends to become the best,’ Wattles wrote. You have got to be something before you achieve something, Dad told me.

Character is a beautiful concept and my previous publication *Thinking into Character* talks lots about these ideas. To receive the best, faith is born of gratitude. Faith is also beautiful terminology that can be defined as the ability to see the invisible, believe in the incredible and receive what the masses think is impossible. I am not talking about religious faith here. I am not saying that that is good or bad. This is not about a religious theology. I am talking about faith in the context of nature. The things we cannot see or feel.

Think about the Wright brothers; two bicycle mechanics who said they could fly. No one believed them, but they saw it, they believed, they had faith. We are all flying now.

The grateful mind continuously expects good things and expectation

becomes faith. The reaction of gratitude upon one's own mind produces faith and every outgoing wave of grateful thankfulness increases the faith. The person who has no feelings of gratitude cannot long retain a living faith, and without a living faith you cannot get what you want in a creative plain in this world. This is what Wattles taught us.

We must get into the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to us. 'We should give thanks continuously,' Dad said. Again, this is not about just paying lip service, or writing a list and then walking away, but deeply giving thanks. It is not just the words, but also feelings that count. You can have gratitude within yourself and feel it without saying thank you all the time and recording it.

Be grateful for everything, even the simple things. Dad used to say to me, 'If you get up in the morning and find a wonderful day, be grateful for that.' During the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, we realised there were so many things we took for granted, such as meeting our friends. The world really changed in March 2020. This book will be around for many years and if someone reads it in 10 years' time, Covid-19 will be history. What I am pointing out here is the many things we are grateful for that we did not appreciate until we were denied them during a lockdown.

Do not waste time worrying about the shortcomings of those in power. Dad always said that and put it so beautifully. Half the people at any dinner party or discussion will always talk about the shortcomings or wrongdoings of the government or of leaders; he never did that. He had a great interest in politics, but he was interested in the facts, rather than saying whether they were right or wrong.

The world has created much opportunity for everyone, and opportunity comes to you via leaders doing certain things. Again, do not look at the negative. Things come to you because of your actions. There are corrupt leaders in all walks of life – business, politics, even religion. Do not give them your energy, because by doing that, you are planting seeds in your mind. You do not want negativity; you only want positive thinking. Of course, you can get involved in politics, but talk about facts. Dad used to say, do not ridicule people, do not say what might have happened. It is easy to criticise but hard to do any better.

As I write this book, more than 40,000 people have died in the United Kingdom with Covid-19, and there are many media outlets saying various things about our leaders. But Dad would say, ‘Do not say that they were wrong, or they should have done this or that. Harvest the good and move forward.’ There is not the least doubt that we will banish negativity if we can operate in a world of positive thinking and gratitude. Remember, they are all helping to raise the lines of transmission along which your success will continue.

‘Be grateful – harvest the good,’ as Dad said, ‘and then the good in everything will move towards you. This will bring you, Mahan (son), he said, into harmony with nature. If you work within the laws of nature, good will move towards you. It is invisible and you cannot see it, but can you see gravity? Can you see friction? You can feel it when it happens, but you cannot see it.’ That is such an important piece of advice.

Let me close with another story that my dad used to talk about from Earl Nightingale. This is a story from a country where a group

of workmen was hired to work on a farm. These people came from a small, remote village where there were then not many motor vehicles. The workmen were excited to be transported on the back of a truck. They had never had that opportunity before. When they came to the place where they thought they were supposed to get off, they stepped off the back of the speeding truck because they hadn't given it any thought. Fortunately, they fell onto a soft road, rather than a paved highway.

They bounced and were hurt and could have died. Thankfully, none was seriously injured and the terrified driver went to the back of the truck to find them laughing. When the truck driver later told the story, he put the blame on them; they had never ridden on trucks before so they just did not know how, and when, to get off. But Nightingale took something different from that story. He believed the amazing circus tumbling act on a remote farm road was caused, not by ignorance, but by a natural law. One that operates the same whether it is a truck, a boat, an airplane, or any other moving body in the world.

Newton talked about this and this is where the physics comes in: a body in motion tends to remain in motion until acted upon by an outside force. When the workers stepped off the back of the speeding truck, they were going at the same speed as the truck itself. The outside force was gravity, which pulled them down to the road, still travelling at the same speed. The law of gravity, the law of friction, saved them. This is exactly what we need to understand – the power of natural laws.

## CHAPTER 6

### FAITH

**F**aith, Dad used to say, is the head chemist of the mind dictating the way that we work. Faith is blended with the vibration of thought and the subconscious mind instantly picks up that vibration and translates it into form. That is how thoughts become actions, as explained by Napoleon Hill. Dad also said that faith is very much linked to love and affection, which means that faith comes with that calmness of love of nature and humanity.

Dad talked about love and faith as psychic, which is the Greek word for related to the mind. There may be a biological aspect attached to faith too.

Faith is a state of mind that may be induced or created by affirmations or repeated instructions to the subconscious mind, building on the repetition concept that lots of psychologists and neuroscientists are now talking about. This is what Hill said, and obviously Dad talked



about it in a quite different way. He always said, ‘Mahan – son – just have faith that things will come to you.’ He told me not to have blind faith, not to blindly follow things, but to see the science behind it.

Dad had a strong Hindu upbringing with my grandparents and then married Mum, who had an exceedingly difficult childhood. She lost her father when she was young, and then studied with the British missionaries in Sri Lanka, becoming a Christian.

When Mum and Dad married, they respected both religions and visited both places of worship. I am a product of that and am very open-minded about religious views. I attended two British schools in Sri Lanka, both of which were based on strong Christian values, and that is something Dad was immensely proud of. I am not religious at all now. I believe in the laws of nature and both of my parents taught me that it was absolutely healthy to understand faith.

So, in this chapter I am not talking about any religious faith, just to make that absolutely clear. I am using the English word faith without attaching any religious context, as this book is nothing to do with religious belief. I respect all religions and am talking here about the laws of nature.

The faith we are talking about is the ability to see the invisible, believe in the incredible and receive what the masses think is impossible. This is the unknown, so how do we work in that unknown? How do we have that faith? That is what we are going to contemplate here, as well as the way in which faith is followed by definite plans for achieving what we desire.

The method by which one develops faith is extremely difficult to describe. 'It is almost as difficult,' Hill said, 'as it would be to describe the colours red, blue, or brown to a blind man who has never seen colour and has nothing with which to compare what you describe.' Think about that – this is that complex.

Faith is a state of mind that you can develop only once you have mastered how things work. All the current research suggests repetition is useful. My father and I used to go to temples and repeat mantras, but Dad said you must not just blindly repeat, you need to understand what you are saying.

Hill believed that people who exhibit disruptive behaviours have planted the wrong things in their minds and Dad talked about the mind being like fertile ground, where if you plant a particular seed, that will grow. Thoughts that are mixed with faith and emotion become physical fact. That is why they say the repetition of a lie becomes the truth, so we must be incredibly careful about what we put our energy, faith and emotions into.

That is why positives and negatives happen in the world. Let us consider the power of faith in the context of Mahatma Gandhi, who my father used to talk about a lot.

Mahatma Gandhi was from India and in this man the world saw an outstanding example of the possibilities of faith. Gandhi achieved more power than any man living in his time, with none of the orthodox tools of power – money, battleships, or soldiers. Gandhi had no money, no home... he did not even own a suit, but he did have power. How did he come by that power? Dad used to talk about Gandhi and my

wife used to call him Gandhi Papa, with Papa meaning grandfather. Hill also referenced Gandhi a great deal in his writing.

Gandhi was an incredible man who created power out of his understanding of faith. Through his ability to translate that faith into the minds of 200 million people, he accomplished a reach that the strongest military power on earth could not and never will achieve.

Gandhi was able to exert influence over 200 million minds and encourage them to move as one; that is the key to his achievement. What other force on earth, except faith, could do as much? Every time at our dinner table when we talk about faith, Mahatma Gandhi has always been the person we talked about. Dad and I had so many discussions and I vividly remember as a young man living in Sri Lanka that I entered a speech competition. I learned all about Gandhi and I spoke about him. At the time, I just memorised it and never attached any feelings or emotions to it. Now, I can reflect and relate back to that.

During the Depression, the world saw the power of fear to paralyse the wheels of industry and business. The same fear exists while I am writing this book in 2020, instigated by Covid-19. We have got to come out of it and faith is the answer. Faith in place of fear.

We know that out of this experience, new leaders in business and industry will emerge. By reading this book, and understanding these concepts, a huge amount of success can be gained.

Look at the success stories of various people in this world and all of them were, at some point, unknown. Business is due for a reform and I believe Covid-19 is going to transform the world. The technological

revolution is coming. Obviously, Dad is not here to talk about that, but some of the ideas he talked about when we were together were around how the world will change. He said there are times when we gradually make changes and then there are times when it is sudden and there is a bang effect that turns the world upside-down. I think 2020 will be one of those times. I am so fortunate to be able to write this book during this time and draw on a lot of the knowledge that Dad has given me.

Going forward, we need faith and cooperation, not fear. That is old style and not the way forward for the new 21st century. Machines are going to take over quite a lot of jobs from the human race, so labour will transform. The whole labour concept of before is gone, the factory concept is gone. Now, those people need to be working on their emotional intelligence, their EQ.

Moreover, in future, people will be led by leaders who understand and employ the principles employed by Mahatma Gandhi. Hill said that only in this way will leaders get the spirit of full cooperation from their followers, which constitutes power in its highest and most enduring form.

The leaders of the machine age have driven the human race into a new reality. This 2020 change will be led by another set of new leaders, some of whom we do not yet know.

‘What will matter in the future,’ Dad used to say, ‘is human happiness and contentment.’ Contentment means the acceptance of gratitude, while faith and individual interest, passion, and integrity, are all also especially important.

Faith is about linking our desires to what we can achieve. Let us talk about positive and negative emotions. I believe both make an impact on processes, so my focus will be very much on the positive emotions. Faith can be defined as a state of mind, and the opposite of faith is fear. Either you have faith, or fear. You cannot instantaneously move from one to another. As Dad used to say, you cannot have darkness in a room where you have strong light; the darkness must fade, and that is absolutely the best comparison.

If you think about us as humans, we have both. There are times when we feel fear and then we switch on the lights and the darkness fades. We are programmed from an incredibly young age to be careful, and not to take risks. Over and over again, the concept of fear is programmed into us, and as we grow, that programming develops. Over time, either you are in the faith camp or the fear camp. 'If you keep switching from one to the other,' Dad said, 'life will not be much fun.'

It is recognised that one comes to believe whatever one repeats to oneself, whether true or false. If we repeat a lie over and over, we eventually accept the lie and believe it is the truth. That goes back to how we are programmed. We were born as a combination of the DNA of our parents and however many thousands of years of DNA before them. I am a product of the huge number of people who have gone before me. The only other aspect is our environment: where we are born, the people around us, and where we live. All of those effectively plant thoughts in our minds.

When we were young, we had no choice about the language

we learned or the way we were brought up. That is exactly how programming works, and once we are programmed, things are impossible to erase – much like learning a language. I learned Tamil as a child and then went to an English school and learned English. But it was impossible to erase what I learned in Tamil; it will always be there. You cannot easily unlearn – the biological and neurological evidence is that all your early learning remains dormant in your brain and once you go back and rattle the cage it will come back.

It is like when you learn to ride a bike as a child; even if you have not ridden a bike for a long time, you cannot unlearn it. That is the extent of the problem we are talking about with fear and faith. We are planting fear every time we tell our children to be careful – do not do that, do not do this. Instead we should give them a positive message, have faith, everything will be fine.

Hill said the thoughts that a man or a woman places directly in their mind and encourages and the sympathy with which those thoughts are mixed with emotions, constitute the motivating forces that direct and control our every movement, act, and deed.

Nature is a great cosmic mass of energy. It is made up of both destructive vibration and constructive vibration, Hill said. It carries vibrations of fear, poverty, disease, failure, misery, and vibrations of prosperity, health, success, and happiness. In 2020, we are dealing with the element of disease, but there is an opposite side, which is the health – the opposite of disease is health, the opposite of poverty is prosperity, the opposite of failure is success and the opposite of not being happy is happiness. Dad used to say, ‘Pick what you want, and

you can create your own economy.’ And I heard that again from Bob Proctor, my mentor.

When I was doing my A-levels, I did not know any of this and I had a limited understanding of physics. Physics is so profound and so beautiful; it is how the whole world works. But we were not taught like that; we were just given facts to remember, without emotions or understanding.

I can see that the education system must change now, towards giving that inside-out practice and building that ethos that *the end result of education is character*. Any thought, idea or plan that one holds in one’s mind attracts from the vibrations of nature, and that is absolutely a cornerstone of Dad’s views.

Dad talked about the definite achievement of an aim, purpose, or goal. We have got to know what we want, he said. If you do not have a goal, you cannot get anywhere.

‘If you bring your car out’, Dad used to say, ‘ask where you are going. If you do not know, you will just drift.’ We all need a goal every day for where we are going, but how many of us have a goal for our careers? How many of us have a goal for our personal life – that is what Dad talked about.

That leads us into what Dad said about people not always having goals. He said sometimes people do not want to think about faith. He talked about a lack of self-confidence. He gave me huge self-confidence as a child; both he and my mum always said everything was possible, and nothing impossible. Perhaps at some point I will

be writing *The Power of Learning from Mum* as my next book, because she gave a different perspective. She had a difficult life and had some emotional challenges; there were times when I did not necessarily agree with Mum, especially in the latter stages of our lives, but I understand her now. She really struggled to shift her emotional programming and to move those paradigms. But she was an incredibly kind woman who always supported me and gave me great self-confidence.

So, Dad talked about how self-confidence is critical, that you must know that you have abilities. To just believe that. Then your dominating forces will put you where you want to be. You have got to believe and repeat it in your own mind, and you have got to have your goal written down somewhere, to allow it to take form. And finally, it is about faith, faith, faith.

When we realise that no success, wealth or happiness is going to come automatically, that eases our thoughts and drives that impulse of success.

All impulsive thoughts tend to close themselves in their physical form, and this is where the human mind plays a big part. Dad believed that we fill our mind with fear, doubt and non-belief in our own ability, the forces of nature will take us into those areas that we do not want to get into. That is all about the faith and the fear, and it very much follows Hill's words. This is as true as the statement that two plus two equals four. If we believe two plus two is four, we must believe there is no concept of faith and fear together. It is as simple as that.

'If you think you are beaten,' Dad said, 'you have already lost the game. If you think you are outclassed, then you have got to think that



you are never going to be a success.’ And, he said, life’s battles do not always go to the stronger or faster people, but sooner or later, the person who wins is the person who thinks they can. That is where faith comes in.

Sometimes, the emotion of love is intricately linked to faith. For me, I was a totally different person in 2006 and my emotion at the loss of my dad really knocked me to the ground. When it did that, the love I had for him, which is what I missed, made me a different person. I would not be doing what I am doing now if he had not taught me these lessons. It is so humbling and sometimes emotional to feel that when he was alive he really gave me everything, but now, since he was lost in that tragic accident, he has perhaps taught me the biggest lesson of my life – to understand what life is and to ask the questions that I am asking.

Mum and Dad always talked about Christianity as the greatest single force to influence the minds of man, and the basis of Christianity is faith. As I said, my mum was a Christian and then became a Hindu like my dad. She and my dad believed the teachings and achievements of Christ all come down to faith. I am not talking about religious faith, but faith based on understanding.

The opposite of understanding is ignorance, or not knowing. If you set off on the path of ignorance, the world will not be good. If you go on that ignorance route, you are moving into a different situation, effectively unable to achieve anything in that space. But the opposite of ignorance is knowledge, and knowledge comes with study.

On the knowledge side, when you study how the world works and

how nature works, when you have the user manual for human life, human spirit, and human intellect, you will gain faith. By having faith, you can express that faith and achieve wellbeing. The opposite of wellbeing is anxiety and depression. Wellbeing is always expressed and when you express it, you accelerate life and you are at ease.

Bob Proctor puts it quite nicely, when he says the opposite of 'at-ease' is 'dis-ease', when your body is not at ease with your mind. That is when the whole dis-creation comes in, when you just go into a downward spiral, and that is where we encounter mental health issues. Today, we treat mental health issues with chemicals to treat the brain, but if you go back to the basics, we can deal with them in a cognitive way.

To come back to the positive side of faith, if you are at ease, the one thing in the world that you will be able to do is create. Dad always said that you are here to create: you become a creator and then you do not need to compete. I absolutely understand this now. When I was training as a chartered accountant in the UK, we were working with some of the top investment houses, fund managers and investment banks. Every time they would ask for a competitor analysis. I used to tell them, you do not need to do a competitor analysis, you just need to do a self-analysis.

I am not here to compete with anybody. Dad's departure taught me that I am here to create. There is so much out there, and the world offers so many opportunities, why would I want to go and compete with another person? Instead, all of us as individuals can understand and grow.

Bob Proctor, my mentor, was born in 1934 and my father was born in 1934 as well. Every time I see Bob, I see my father. My dad did not have the opportunity to express what Bob has taught to the world. It is nice to conclude this chapter with what Bob says: ‘Faith and fear both demand that you believe in something you cannot see.’

As we have said, it is your choice, which one you choose to welcome into your life.

# CHAPTER 7

## KNOWLEDGE

**D**ad always mentioned there are two kinds of knowledge to work on, the first being general knowledge and the second specialist knowledge, something that Napoleon Hill said too. General knowledge is, no matter how great in quantity or variety, not necessarily going to help you achieve your particular goals, particularly if you are looking at the context of growing a business or trying to achieve a certain level of success within the business world.

Hill wrote that knowledge will not attract success unless it is organised and intelligently directed, through practical plans, to the definite end of success, perhaps referring to financial or business success. He also believed that a lack of understanding of this is a source of confusion to lots of people who falsely believe that knowledge is power. A lot of people have talked about these concepts, but Dad was clear on this. He said that it is completely wrong to say that knowledge is power – it is nothing of the sort. Knowledge is only potential power, and the key

word is potential. Knowledge becomes power only when, and if, it is organised into definite plans of action directed towards a definite goal.

Hill wrote that this missing link exists in all systems of education known to civilisation and can be seen in the failure to direct knowledge into specific success. Understanding how to organise and use knowledge after its acquisition is vital. Dad talked about various people in this context, particularly Henry Ford, who he talked about a lot because he did not have a lot of education, but went on to achieve great things.

The word education is derived from the Latin word *educio*, meaning to induce, draw out, or develop from within. That is where the Regent Group's system of inside-out education comes from and I believe it is the way forward for this world. Hill talked about this when he explained that an educated person is not necessarily one that has an abundance of general knowledge or specialised knowledge. An educated person is one who has so developed the faculties of their mind that they can acquire anything they want without violating the rights of others.

Dad shared this view, though he probably did not put it as eloquently as Hill. Still, he always told me that just having theoretical knowledge is not going to get you anywhere.

And he talked about many examples of this during the world wars, where knowledge proved so important. I am writing this chapter on the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and it is quite a tribute to my dad to think through those various stories.

He talked a lot about Henry Ford, who lived through both world wars. Ford was not educated, and people used to say that he was not

capable of achieving anything. He was called ignorant. Apparently, at one point he was in court, and in court they were asking him all sorts of questions. ‘Do you know how many British soldiers were sent to war?’ they said. ‘Do you know how many died?’ They asked him all sorts of questions.

Dad told me that at one point, getting frustrated, Ford said, ‘I know lots of people went to war and lots of people did not return.’ The court did not see that as a valuable answer and continued to drill him with questions, often about numbers and percentages. Eventually, Ford said, ‘You are asking me questions that I really do not need to know, because I have a purpose, which is to create something that is going to replace the whole system of carriages. That is my purpose; I do not need to know all of this.’

He continued, ‘Let me tell you this. If I really want to know, I have men and women around me who can answer these questions, so I do not need to clutter my knowledge. I will continue to get on with what I need to do.’ I know Hill has written about this too.

Dad said it is interesting for us to reflect on general knowledge versus specialist knowledge. Before you can be sure of your ability to transmit your desire into success using specialist knowledge, you need to really understand that concept. The accumulation of success or wealth calls for power, and power is acquired through highly organised and intelligently directed specialist knowledge.

But that knowledge does not necessarily have to be in the possession of the person who is creating that success. Dad used to talk about the idea of a remote control. He did a lot of farming and lot

of construction projects, but he always said he knew nothing about farming and nothing about construction. He would hardly visit the construction sites. But he had the right people in the right spots, and he built his businesses very successfully, believing that good leadership and management is not about being the expert yourself, but harnessing the skills of others. In fact, Andrew Carnegie also said that he did not know a lot about steel, yet he became successful and eventually built a steel empire.

Dad also said that sometimes people go through life suffering from some kind of an inferiority complex, because they are not people who succeeded in education. Earl Nightingale pointed out that the person who can organise and direct people to a common cause is the one who has benefited from what education can give to us. Dad spent a lot of time around that, and obviously talked about people like Thomas Edison, another American inventor who had only three months of schooling during his entire life but did not lack education. Neither did he die poor, of course.

Successful people in all callings never stop acquiring specialist knowledge relating to their major purpose, business, or profession. Those who are not successful usually make the mistake of believing that learning ends when they finish school or university. ‘That is absolutely wrong,’ Dad said. I could not go to a UK university to do an undergraduate degree purely because I came from Sri Lanka as a refugee from the war and did not have the money to pay. But since then, I have been fortunate enough to spend time at some of the best universities in the UK, and the London Business School. I am about to go to Oxford to do some work, and I am also fortunate to have been to

Harvard and Stanford, which demonstrates the seeds that he planted in my mind. That specialist education never stops.

The truth is that school does little more than teach us the ways of learning, showing young people how best to acquire practical knowledge. School is valuable for teaching how to learn, how to study and how to research. But once we finish school we stop learning and think we are done. That is not a sensible way to proceed.

In the wake of the world wars we saw astounding changes in education requirement, and I believe the same will be true in the wake of Covid-19. What is needed is specialisation and specialist knowledge and, more importantly, the concept of digital learning for the 21st century.

Never accept a free lunch: anything acquired without effort and without cost is always under-appreciated. This may explain why so many of us take so little from the marvellous opportunities that we are offered through our free education system. We must appreciate what we are getting and make use of it. Indeed, whilst the state system offers free education to children up to the age of 18, of course it is funded by the taxpayer.

The sole discipline that one receives from a definite programme of study makes up, to some extent, for the wasted opportunity that we may have missed. I went to one of the first British schools in Sri Lanka and was well schooled, achieving good GCSE results. It was an extremely challenging period and obviously I tell my daughters and my wife that I could not do my exams properly because of the war and all the disruption that was going on. While I was studying my A-levels



a peace accord was signed, so for six to nine months we had the best time and enjoyed life in peace, having fun and dropping our studies. But then, I was conscripted by force into one of the militant groups and spent time in the warzone, before my parents were thankfully able to get me out. By the time my exams came around, I was not at all prepared.

My daughters once said to me that maybe it was not because of the war, but perhaps I was just enjoying life too much. I kind of agree with them. If I really go back and look at it, I think I did enjoy life too much during that peacetime. But I don't necessarily regret it – that was the best time in my life in Sri Lanka and I had some great friends; if any of my fellow boys and girls in the class of 1989 are reading this, they will remember the wonderful life we had while we were studying our A-levels.

Often people say they cannot go to school because they have a family to support or they are poor, they are distracted by national problems or war, or they say they will gather the information later. That is similar to my own personal story about why I could not get good A-levels – partly due to circumstances, partly as I was simply having too much fun – even though my mother wanted me to be a medical doctor. Yet the person who stops studying simply because they have finished school is forever destined for mediocrity. It does not matter what their calling may be. The way to achieve success is only through the ongoing pursuit of specialist knowledge.

When it comes to specialist knowledge, Dad always told me to follow my passion and do what I really like. As I have mentioned, when

we were in Sri Lanka we did not have an awful lot of choices; I am talking about 1989 and there was no internet. Libraries were there but you had to go to the capital city, and we were living in a warzone. It was difficult, but Dad told me to follow my passion. At the time, I did not know what passion was; my passion was enjoying life with friends! But I have found my passion in what I do now: the potential of behaviour to drive success, change management and making the world a better place, those are my passions. I am so glad Dad planted those seeds when I was young.

Dad told me when I left Sri Lanka in 1990 that I had a choice – either to refocus my life or carry on having fun times. I chose the former and have not lacked that focus since.

Dad said that specialist knowledge, plus imagination, were the ingredients needed to blend into this unique model of how we create success. He talked about people who face temporary defeats and told me never to mistake temporary defeat for failure. ‘We all experience lots of temporary defeats,’ he said, ‘but you need to persist, and once you have a passion you can see that is possible. When you do not have a passion and a goal, you do not achieve, and you give up.’ I now talk about success being the progressive realisation of a worthy goal. If you hit a problem, it is not a failure; it is a temporary setback. But if you do not know where you are going, it is hard to see that and perhaps you dwell on problems more than you should.

We are going to see a changed economic situation post Covid-19. I think personal services will become a good way of coming out of the crisis. For instance, there are numerous examples of taxi drivers who

lost their jobs and went on to learn bookkeeping and create a business or a cook who lost their job and found a different way. Dad only had a glimpse of the technology that we have now, but he talked a lot about seeing opportunity coming, and being ready to seize that opportunity.

That nicely takes us into what Dad said about how once you have gained your specialist knowledge, there is no fixed price for sound ideas. The bedrock of all ideas is specialist knowledge. Hill said that we will not find success in abundance without ideas, which are harder to acquire than specialist knowledge. Because of this, there is natural law of universal demand and an ever-increasing opportunity for the person capable of helping others by providing a service. It is all about providing a service. When you provide service, you build that cause and effect – action and reaction; again, the sound laws of nature, which we come back to in every scenario.

Capability feeds imagination, which is the one quality needed to combine specialist knowledge with ideas in order to create plans. If we can understand all of these things and put these ideas into work, we can achieve what we want to achieve.

When it comes to knowledge, Dad said we are all an organisation in our own right. Every person, in reality, is in business for themselves, in that they are building their own life regardless of who happens to pay their pay cheque or how they are generating their revenues. Here Dad is drawing on the teachings of Earl Nightingale, who also talked of the concept of the self as corporation. So, the purpose of specialist knowledge is to think about yourself as a business. Dad said, ‘Mahan – son – you are in business for yourself. You have got to think like

that. You are the president, the CEO, the leader. You are responsible for your success or failure.’ He said that to me from a young age and, while I didn’t always understand, I began to understand that it was up to me, rather than anyone around me.

I did not emotionalise everything that Dad told me at the time; it was only after he was gone that I started to really focus on it. Now I urge all sons and daughters reading this book to do the same thing. Please do this now while your parents are still alive. Regrettably, I did not heed my own lesson at the time. I respected him enormously and loved him deeply, but I did not understand what he was saying.

The problem was not that I did not want to do it, I just did not know what he was talking about, because my level of awareness was not there. But it was going into my system, and hence I am realising it all now. He always said that I might not understand it as a young man, I might not even understand it later in life; that would all depend on the journey I was going to take. He was right. I talk to my girls now and I see that cycle repeating.

‘You and the members of your family are shareholders in your organisation,’ said Nightingale. Your family has some responsibility for you, but it is important that you take charge and are in the lead. My mum and dad clearly played a big part in my life and gave me the best education in Sri Lanka. Then, when I started life again here, Dad gave me £100 in 1990, because that was all he was able to give. I think he would have given a lot more if he could. But he gave me that £100 and I was grateful. Then he told me it was my responsibility to prove my faith was justified.

When I left in 1990, it was in the thick of the war and Mum and Dad came to the airport and said goodbye. I was sad to be leaving; we were an awfully close family. I was heading off and Dad called me back and said, ‘For the first 20 years you had a fantastic life, especially in the last few years during your A-levels, I know you have enjoyed every aspect of life. But you have a choice now: to carry on having that fantastic time without any purpose, or, now that you are on your own in a new country, you can change your life.’

Those were his final words and once on the plane I started going over and over those words. That gave me a real focus. When I came to this country, I hit so many issues: I had no money, I could not get a job. I had to work in a psychiatric hospital for two and a half years as a cleaner. Then, when Dad came in 1994, I had started to do other jobs, while studying, and I finally got into Prudential when I was qualified. Dad said that when I left I had no idea what hard work was, or what a difficult life was, but he was incredibly proud of what I had achieved on my own.

Dad said that part of the operational role of running yourself as a business is to gain a knowledge and understanding of finance. Fortunately for me I became an accountant, but he always said you need to understand finance and you need to understand production. What you produce in your life and your business, you need to be able to provide to other people in the form of a service that sells. And more importantly, he said that you must understand research, which comes back to knowledge. He said without proper finance there can be no production, and without production a person will have nothing to

offer. Nightingale wrote this too and said that without research you cannot expect to keep anything, and you will not survive.

Dad also said that if you do not have this whole set of functions, you have a deformed and crippled company. He had a variety of businesses in Sri Lanka – farmland, construction, property, and a haulage company. I remember suggesting that he concentrate on one thing. But he stressed the need to grow. I am sure over time he made some not so positive decisions, but the essence of the story is that he believed all humans and companies need to grow, and we cannot stop. It is because in natural law, which applies to companies just as it does human beings, nothing stands still.

Dad said that the law of physics says a body in motion tends to remain in motion until acted upon by an outside force. Did I understand that at the time? Absolutely not. A company that is growing tends to continue to grow, just like humans. Conversely, a company that is going backwards or shrinking tends to go backwards or shrink until acted upon by an outside force. All responsible human beings, family leaders, company officers and leaders of governments, know that unless we are growing, we are developing the first signs of death. I'm not talking about physically dying but ceasing to grow. As the head of your own corporation, you need to ensure you continue to grow.

These ideas of knowledge have been incredibly useful, and Dad spent a lot of time explaining the purpose of a continuous education. Today, the world now talks about lifelong learning. A report recently published by London Business School explored the concept of the

100-year life, and the current research is that we will have two, three, even four careers in our lifetimes.

Look at what is happening with Covid-19; the world is going to shift. Some sectors are going to grow and some will need to change. The only way to bounce back from this situation is by improving yourself and your specialist knowledge. If you are in a sector that is suffering, that is okay, you have a choice. You can sit and talk about that sector or you can go out and retrain. In the United Kingdom, there are many ways you can do that with government support – you can study full-time, part-time, through blended learning. We are all offered so much support, but we have got to go and do it, it is not going to land on our plate.

It is important that we understand the concept of general knowledge in the context of enjoyment. There are many good things you can learn for fun, for enjoyment. I now enjoy learning about wine, I really like my wine but equally I have enjoyed learning about its history and production.

But it is important to understand that learning about wine is not really going to help me achieve my goals and what I am trying to achieve for Regent Group. For that I need the specialist knowledge. That is the difference between general knowledge – learning the presidents of the United States for the last 200 years is useful, but you can just Google it. If you want to memorise that, that's great because memory is not just about knowing those facts but also boosting and firing up the electrons in your brain. You are firing up your intellectual factors and that piece of knowledge is valuable.

But, the knowledge that is valuable for the specific achievement of your goals and the fulfilment of your success in your chosen passion or career, that is specialist knowledge. Our population is not just exploring, it is getting smarter. The advances that have occurred in the past 10 years alone are remarkable, but during the next 10 years, they will be amazing. The customer is getting smarter every day, and if they are going to continue to make demands and you are going to provide a service, or sell them a product, you better get smarter every day too.

‘The market of the next 10 years will be characterised by diversity, not uniformity,’ Nightingale wrote. ‘It will also be dominated by taste, not necessity. There will be a great increase in the quality as well as the quantity of consumer choices,’ he said. And there are many signs of the rising need for the better things in life. Many millions of adults are now seeking a way of education, and when technology fuels education it is absolutely going to drive the concept of knowledge that we are exploring here.

The question to ask yourself is: ‘How much am I worth right now, today, as a company or an organisation? What is my value, to myself, to my family, to my company, to my country and to the whole world?’ If you can convince yourself that you are giving everything you can, then you are learning every day and acquiring specialist knowledge, so you have done a great day of work.



# CHAPTER 8

## IMAGINATION

**D**ad told many stories about imagination and, as well as sharing some of those stories, it is important to consider what he actually meant by imagination, and what I now understand as a result of my studies of human potential and human behaviour.

Hill wrote a chapter on imagination, in which he described it as ‘the workshop within which everything is fashioned and planned before it is created by humans.’ He said that any impulse or desire is given shape, form, and action with the aid of the imagination. Imagination is an intellectual tool that humans were gifted and perhaps animals were not. It has been said that a man or woman can create anything that he or she can imagine.

Our current time is the most favourable era ever for the development of the imagination because it is an age of rapid change. The time of Covid-19 is clearly a time of rapid change, and if we use

our imagination, we can transform various sectors. On one hand, we have the ideas, and on the other hand, we have the imagination to push those ideas into products.

‘With the aid of imagination, man has discovered and harnessed nature’s forces,’ Hill said. We have discovered that our own brains are both a broadcasting and receiving station for the vibration of thought, and we can create ideas and turn those ideas into reality.

He wrote that there are two types of imagination that we need to consider. First is synthetic imagination – effectively an idea that is already there, that you take to a different level. The other is creative imagination – an idea that is not there. Dad talked more about creative imagination. He used to tell me that I had to come up with ideas that no one else had come up with before. He said that this was something he was not necessarily good at, but he saw the importance of it.

Creative imagination works automatically in human beings, who have been given that power. The creative faculty becomes alert and receptive to vibrations from our desire to achieve certain things. Then, imagination is a creative tool, like a physical muscle. If you want to improve the muscles in your body, you need to do lots of exercise. The same thing applies if you want to improve your imagination.

Hill said that the great leaders of business, industry and finance, and the great artists, writers, and musicians, all became great because they developed the faculty of creative imagination. Both the synthetic and creative faculties of imagination become more alert with use, just as any muscle or organ that the body develops through use.

And Dad always said that desire is only a thought, an idea, but imagination takes that desire and turns it into reality. Your imagination will die if you do not use it. If you do not have imagination and do not use it, it can be revived and made alert, but use is especially important. The faculty does not die, though it may become quiet or sleeping. Once you start using it, it grows.

Dad used to tell a story about how – in reality – things will absolutely happen. He believed that, and as I have said previously, he never had a savings account, he only had a current account. Whatever he earned, he never worried about tomorrow. He knew, and he always said, ‘When I want something, I will have it.’

He talked about somebody who wanted to set up a project to support a particular cause, to create something for children who did not have a proper education. This man had a great plan for many years, but nothing happened because he thought about it a lot and did nothing. He had purpose, but he could not achieve the relevant financial backing to set it up. This is exactly what most people would do.

One day, this man thought about this and said, ‘Why am I only thinking about this and imagining – how can I make this happen? For two years, I have done nothing but thinking.’ Thinking alone is not enough; thinking alone is not going to give you the success that you seek.

The time had come for action, which is when imagination needs to integrate to get a reaction. He wanted to find a way forward, to find a way to get his project off the ground. He was not concerned about how – the most important thing was his decision to get what he wanted, to source the finance to back it, and to make it happen.

Even though this person took action as a result of his desire, in my last book, *Thinking into Character*, we discuss how internalising the desire into the subconscious mind is key to success.

A strange feeling of assurance comes over us when we are in that space. The rest of the world might not see it, but you can feel something that you have never experienced. And, as the story goes, the man took action. For a few months he was still not able to raise finance, but one day, thanks to persistence, he got what he wanted.

That story shows that imagination is key, but it is also especially important that you do not just sit on imagination and do nothing; if you do not take action, your imagination will not deliver results.

Synthetic imagination is used more often in the process of creating success from a financial standpoint. Meanwhile, the success that you create in relation to coming up with new ideas sits on the creative side of the imagination. Let us look at some of Hill's ideas here in more depth.

'The earth on which we live is the result of evolutionary change through which microscopic bits of matter have been organised and arranged in an orderly fashion,' he wrote. The imagination is the opportunity to create a picture in your mind.

Moreover, and this statement is of great importance, on earth, every one of the billions of individual cells in our body and every atom of matter began as an integral form of energy. Everything was intangible and became tangible. When it is intangible, it is in the form of imagination.

Hill also believed that desire is a thought impulse and thought impulses are forms of energy. He said that when you begin with the thought impulse, desire to become successful and achieve something is fuelled by the imagination. As far as science has been able to determine, the entire universe consists of two elements: matter and energy. Dad talked a lot about that.

‘Everything has been created through the combination of energy and matter, from the largest stars that float in the heavens down to the smallest beings, including ourselves,’ Hill said. Imagination has been a key part of that. And I would urge you – whoever you are, however you may live and whatever your occupation, to remember the story Dad told about Coca-Cola.

I loved Coca-Cola when I was young, and every time I drank it, he would tell me about how that huge successful global business had grown out of one single idea, which was the secret recipe behind Coca-Cola. ‘The biggest secret is imagination,’ he always said, and I think of that every time I drink a Coke.

‘The problem is,’ Dad said, ‘that everyone can develop imagination.’ Now, I have a better understanding of how you can work imagination into action, because imagination and ideas sit in your conscious mind and your body does not act until they are transferred to your subconscious mind. As soon as they reach your subconscious mind, you can automatically take action. That’s where my *Thinking into Character* book connects. ‘Sometimes it is abstract,’ Dad used to say, ‘but now I can put the jigsaw together.’

What can we learn from Dad’s story of the man who finally took

action? There is nothing new and unique about this person. They were thinking about a goal and that is not unique; others before them and many since have had similar thoughts. But there was something unique and different about the decision that this person reached on that memorable day, when he put that vagueness into the background and definitely said I will get the financial backing by this date and make this work.

‘The story of practically every great success starts with the day a creator of an idea and a believer in that idea came together and worked in harmony,’ Hill said. Dad used to say he wanted to surround himself with people with the ideas and abilities he did not have. Some excel at having creative ideas, while others are better at putting ideas into action.

My dad said that millions of people go through life hoping to be given a big break, but the faithful plan is not to depend upon luck.

Hill defined luck as ‘a readiness to receive an opportunity’. I like that definition, but I know others feel differently; one colleague, my assistant, who I have worked with for 15 years, and who also worked alongside my father, is convinced that there is luck. In essence, what we are really saying is that an opportunity comes to you and if you are ready to receive it, then the rest of the world will say you are lucky. You have got to have gratitude within yourself that you have received that opportunity. So, it is a word that needs to be understood properly rather than taken out of context. It was a favourable break that gave someone the opportunity to succeed. But when that opportunity came, they took action.

One other idea we need to talk about is the concept of religious leaders. I am not talking about religion here, just the ideas. Hill said that ideas are intangible forces, but they have more power than the simple brains that give birth to them. They have the power to move on after the brain that creates has returned to dust. Think about that. Think about how any religion, such as Christianity, began with the simple idea born in the brain of one person, in that case Christ. There are lots of other examples. Think of the world around those religious leaders that carries on long after they are not there.

‘Success requires no explanations, failures permit no alibis,’ Hill said.

Dad and I talked a lot about the concept of a physical form of achievement and where you stop. Some people feel it is quite proper to visualise or imagine gaining material things. But the clearest form is necessary for self-recognition, and it is good for the spirit. From an individual’s standpoint, it is about carrying the creative process forward. Far from matter being an illusion, having imagination is critical and is the channel for the self-differentiation of the form from the spirit, or the non-form. It is not always the desire people have for that physical form that matters but having the imagination to enable you to achieve what you want to achieve.

Matter is any substance that has mass and takes up space by having volume. All everyday objects that can be touched are ultimately made up of atoms, which are in turn made up of interacting subatomic particles. Understand that this physics of matter, and the way in which the world has evolved, has always started with imagination. There is

nothing unusual or mysterious in the idea of the picture that we have in our mind coming into material being as a result of imagination. It is the working of natural laws.

The world was projected by the self-contemplation of the universal mind and this same action is taking place in its individualised branch – the mind of humans. This was written about by the French author Genevieve Behrend, who said that everything in our whole world has a beginning in our mind and comes into it in the same manner, from the hat on our head, to the boots on our feet. Dad used to say that our personal advance in evolution depends upon the right use of the power of imagination. The use of it depends on whether you recognise that you yourself are a centre in which an originating idea finds ever new possibilities for expression.

Hill said the mental picture is the force of attraction, the powerhouse that evolves and combines the originating substance to create a particular shape. The creative action is limitless, without beginning and without end, always progressing and orderly. It proceeds stage-by-stage, each stage being in preparation for the one to follow, he believed. This is where the whole concept of opportunity and luck comes in; it happens stage by stage, and when that happens, you can see that a picture is forming.

When a child is conceived, it forms, and that is nature. Whether it is a human being, a product, a business, anything; if you give birth to that idea, it will grow. The best analogy Dad shared was that if you want to build a house, but you do not have a detailed plan, then clearly the building will not end up in good shape. Therefore, having that clear



idea of exactly what we want, and having that mental picture is critical. Dad explained to me that you must have a picture to achieve a passion.

Huge emphasis should be put on taking action. Dad said that imagination has to be linked to action. He believed that each day consists of a series of acts of all kinds. The success of the day depends on the successful completion of most of these acts – that is something that Paul O. Roberts wrote about too. In each day, if each of these acts is done to the best of our ability, we can fall asleep at night safe in the knowledge that we have done our very best, that the day has been a success, and that one more stone is successfully in place. That one more stone is part of your biggest imagination. So, you had the imagination, you created that picture. You go back to that idea of a beautiful building that you are creating and just think that you are putting in one more stone. If you don't put that stone in the proper way each day, then it will not be a good building.

'This is the way to really live,' Dad always said. He lived every day without concerning himself about tomorrow, he just lived each day and each day he did all that could be done. He told me that there was no need to overwork, or rush blindly into work or trying to do the greatest number of possible things in the shortest possible time. He would only do a certain amount of work and then he would say that he was done for the day. Mum sometimes would say he was lazy, but it was not that. I think I understand that now. My girls say that I am lazy and it is lovely to hear the way that say it.

It is not so much the number of things you do, but the efficiency of each separate act that will gradually create success. That is the habit

of success and is one reason why successful people go from one success to another, because it is a happy time for them. To get the habit of success, we all need to succeed with small acts each day. This makes a successful day, then a successful week, month, and year. Stephen R. Covey has explored these ideas in some depth, as have others.

Imagination creates a picture: you take action every day, you have successful days, and then it will happen. We should not give any energy to thinking about how. I realise now, after 50 years, that I have always worried about my weight and that has gone into my subconscious mind. I have lost weight several times over the years. Now, I do not say I have lost weight, because by losing it you gain it. Over my last 50 years, the pattern has always been that I've lost weight, gained it and then lost it again. Dad told me I should just release it and it would not come back. That is one way to understand the whole body concept.

One thing that is so sad, is that the week before Dad passed away, he had a party at home and I was, as usual, trying to lose weight, so I did not want to stay. I wanted to achieve this particular weight by a particular day, so I walked away. That is perhaps the biggest regret I have; the last Saturday that Mum and Dad hosted a party together in their house, I left early because I was trying to lose weight.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, I was reading and thinking about weight. About what I was getting right, and Dad's belief came to me that said always release it, never lose it, because if you lose it, you will regain it. That made me make a committed decision – that I will change my approach. This book will be published on 20 August 2020, when I turn 50, and that is my tribute to my dad; for giving me a life

to live in this world for 50 years. From that day, I will never say, 'I am losing weight.' I have done that for 49 years. The image I had was not working, but now I have an image and I am working towards that. What is success? Success is the progressive realisation of a worthy goal. So, it might help people, because every one of us is concerned about body weight. If we can use the word release, then we can let go of that weight.

Dad said, 'You do not succeed because of luck; you know you will get it if you follow this plan. Almost before you realise it, you will have achieved your goal. Looking back, you realise that you are successful. You cannot pinpoint your success happening on one particular day, week, or month. You cannot end a day and say you are successful. You achieve success through consistently successful single days.' This is the way that human life should be tackled – one successful day at a time. Each day should comprise a collection of successful acts, one at a time.

To finish this chapter and to bring some of these ideas together, we should remember not to be impatient. You can be in a rush to get things done, but you must not be impatient. Do not let the hundreds of little disruptions that happen each day put you off course or bother with your peace of mind.

When we were in Sri Lanka, in those days some people had little ants that would bite. Dad used to say that there was no point in taking an ant, putting it inside your shirt and then complaining of discomfort.

With this crude story, he was stressing that it is our own actions that make us suffer. So, pay no attention to ants; shake them off and get on with work. Concentrate on each day and on each act of the day from

morning to night. Do each of your acts as successfully as you can, knowing full well that if each of your acts is performed successfully, or at least the great majority of them, then that day has to be successful. 'There is no other answer.' Hill said that, and so did Dad.

## CHAPTER 9

### PLANNING

**D**ad always said that if you really want to achieve something, you need a decent plan. It may seem obvious, but the key point is that if the first plan that you adopt does not work successfully, replace it with a new plan. If this new plan fails to work, replace it again, until you find a plan that does work. Hill said that this is the point at which the majority of men and women meet with failure – because of their lack of persistence in creating new plans to take the place of those that fail.

In the early stages, coming from Sri Lanka in the war, we would plan to do certain things and they would not work. We tried many, many things, and there were times when I just wanted to give up. Dad continuously stressed the value of persistence, and that is what I am talking about in this chapter.

Most intelligent men and women cannot succeed in any undertaking, whether increasing wealth or studying at school, university or college,

without plans that are practical and workable. Hill believed this and Dad always stressed it too: ‘Just keep this fact in mind, son, and remember that when your plans fail, that is only a temporary setback. Build new plans and start all over again,’ he said. ‘When you fall, pick yourself up, brush yourself off and keep going.’

Thomas Edison is a great example of this in action; it took 10,000 attempts before he perfected the electric light bulb. He met with temporary defeat 10,000 times before he was crowned with success. Hill talked about Edison, and Dad also talked about Edmund Hillary climbing Mount Everest – that he had a desire, a purpose, and he kept going until he won. ‘Temporary defeat should mean only one thing – the certain knowledge that there is something wrong with your plan,’ Hill said. ‘Millions of men and women go through life in misery and poverty because they lack a sound plan through which to accumulate the success they desire,’ he added.

Dad used to say, ‘Your achievement can be no greater than your plans are sound.’ That fairly straightforward statement comes from Hill’s teachings and it is true, there are so many examples where changing the plans and taking action has resulted in massive success. The key thing is that failure is but a temporary defeat. You should keep persistence and rebuild new plans.

Dad said no man or woman is defeated until they give up. Once you have made up your mind, it will be set, and it will happen. The problem is that we are influenced by our senses, our paradigms, our habits and other people’s opinions, so sometimes we give up. But if you have a strong will and you say in your mind you are going to do something, it will happen.

‘It is so easy to take flight at the first sign of defeat. A temporary defeat is never the end of the game,’ Dad said. We see men who have succeeded in sport or in business, but we recognise only their success while overlooking the temporary defeats they had to overcome beforehand.

‘When defeat comes, accept it as a sign that your plans are not sound, redo those plans and set sail once more towards your stated goal,’ Hill said. And my dad believed that if you give up before your goal has been reached you are a quitter. And quoting Hill, he said, ‘A quitter never wins and a winner never quits.’ That is a sentence he told me to memorise, to put it in my psyche and do whatever I wanted to do.

When you select people to discuss your plans with, be careful. If you have people around you who do not understand these concepts, you risk getting into the wrong psyche.

Dad also talked about two types of people in the world – leaders and followers. Hill also wrote about this concept. It is important to decide at the outset whether you intend to become a leader in your chosen calling or remain a follower. The difference in compensation is vast. The follower cannot reasonably expect the compensation to which a leader is entitled, although many followers make the mistake of expecting just that.

Dad spent a lot of time talking about this, especially in the early stages of my career in the United Kingdom, when I was struggling in many ways. I did not go to a UK university; I qualified as an accountant and I was so fortunate to do so, but it was a struggle. I started with Prudential Financial Inc, the US investment house, when

I was 23 and then the career ladder was a struggle for many reasons, but Dad urged me to keep going, not to give up, to have a plan. Finally, before taking up my role as CEO of Regent Group I was the VP at Fortress Investment Group PLC.

‘It is no disgrace to be a follower,’ Dad used to say to me, ‘as long as you are an intelligent follower.’ On the other hand, it is no credit to remain a follower. Most brave leaders began in the capacity of followers and became great leaders because they were intelligent followers. Hill said that with a few exceptions, a man or woman who cannot follow, cannot become an effective leader. A man or woman who can follow most efficiently is usually the man or woman who develops into leadership most rapidly.

Planning is linked to leadership, because when you are planning you must take action and in order to take action, you need leadership. An intelligent follower has many advantages, among them the opportunity to acquire knowledge from a leader. There is an especially important distinction, Dad used to say, between accepting other people’s opinions and intelligently following someone.

Dad believed that when you are looking at someone else, you may not entirely like their way of life, but you should try to pick one or two things to admire. That always stayed in my mind. There are things that I look at in successful people. I might not entirely agree with their lifestyle or their views, but I may like something – the way they walk, the way they express their views. It can be simple things.

Dad told me to take ideas, but not to follow blindly. He even insisted that I should not follow him blindly, because he and I were different



people with different ideas. ‘Take a few ideas from me if those resonate with you,’ he said, and that really resonated. Even now I learn from a lot of people. There are people such as Clay Christensen, who really started to increase my interest in this topic. There are bits I love about Clay, bits I love about Bob Proctor, and there are many others that I follow, including various CEOs.

I read about Steve Jobs; I may not completely agree with everything he said or did, but there are some things that I really like. I don’t want to be him, but one thing he said sticks with me, ‘You can never connect the dots looking forward, you can always connect the dots looking backwards. But you have got to believe the dots will connect themselves.’ That is where the planning comes in.

So, when you are making these journeys, if you are not able to achieve your goal, never give up, keep working towards it. I am an intelligent follower of Steve Jobs. Clearly, I am not interested in some other aspects of what he talked about, but we need to focus on the positive things we can take from people.

Dad said if you really want to plan and execute a strategy, you have got to have leadership and take action. He also believed that you need unwavering courage. You cannot have fear; bravery and courage are critical to leadership. No intelligent follower will be dominated by a fearful leader for long.

Hill set out a list of attributes required for successful leadership, and Dad spoke of these often. ‘A leader must have self-control,’ he said. The man or woman without self-control can never control others.

This is an area where I have done a huge amount of work, where discipline comes in.

I attended a British school in Sri Lanka and there we had a lot of discipline. From the way we did our shirts to the way we wore our tie, all sorts of things. Discipline in this context is about how we give ourselves a command and we do it. That is the self-control. This is a huge area that I do not always follow to the best of my abilities, but I try. You set goals one day at a time.

Dad always thought that a keen sense of justice was important. And this is true. Without a sense of fairness and justice, you are never going to execute your plans. You have got to make committed decisions, as we have talked about in Chapter 3. Definiteness of plans is so important for a leader. A leader who moves by guesswork but without practical, definite plans, is comparable to a ship without a rudder – sooner or later it will land on the rocks.

Dad also talked about the habit of doing more than you are paid to do. He said that he always did more than he got paid for. He always urged me to give my maximum, to give everything I could. When you do that you may not get immediate rewards, but nature will reward you, and I think that is completely right. I could not see that when I was young, but now in everything I do I want to do more than I get paid to do. In our organisation, a student pays us a fee – I want to make sure we give the students more than they have paid for. Obviously, education has more than cash value, but clearly the use value should be far more than the cash value.

A pleasing personality is important. Dad said be relaxed, not uptight. He was such an easy-going guy, he believed that having a calmness of mind was the most beautiful way of existing. Be pleasing, be approachable; that doesn't mean you cannot be assertive, but you need a pleasing personality, with sympathy and understanding, to execute your plan.

If you really want to be able to execute, you also need an eye for detail. Successful executors zoom in on the detail all the time. You need to know what is core and what is incidental.

Leaders need a willingness to assume full responsibility – the buck stops with them. No matter if you are leading a company, a community, a country; at every level, there is a position of responsibility. A successful leader must be willing to assume responsibility for the mistakes and shortcomings of their followers. If he tries to shift this responsibility, he will not remain the leader. If one of his followers makes a mistake and shows himself incompetent, the leader must consider that it is he that failed. This is enormously valuable and a huge lesson that I am learning in our journey at Regent Group. If something goes wrong down the line, the buck stops at me.

Cooperation – the successful leader is a person who can execute and can understand and apply the principles of working together. Obviously, there are two types of management and leadership – leadership by consent and leadership by force. Dad said that leadership by force will never work. 'History is filled with evidence that leadership by force cannot endure,' he said.

The world is entering a new era of a fresh relationship between leaders and followers. It is clear, because new types of leaders, especially in the technology world, are emerging, and a new brand of leadership. I am writing this book in the Covid-19 world and Dad's teaching is spot on; he was a visionary. He was talking about these things many years ago.

Dad talked about the relationship between employer and employee and here, again, there is much alignment with the words of Hill. These ideas come from Hill's exploration of the attributes of leaders. He said you need mutual respect based on an equitable division of profits of the business. Dad always said that without employees, an organisation cannot achieve anything. He believed in an equitable division of profit. He believed in conservative values but responsible conservatism. He absolutely believed that we have got to make our own success in our own life, but we have got to give to the nation, without expecting anything back. He believed in free enterprise, in entrepreneurship, in all of those values, but he also believed in responsible capitalism so that if you are successful, the people who made you successful should also have a piece of the pie.

Dad said the future relationship between employer and employee will be more like partnership than it has been in the past. Many companies now take their lead from organisations such as the John Lewis Partnership, and work like this.

He also talked about not being able to execute plans as a major source of failure. He talked about the importance of the ability to organise details. If you do not know how to do that, you are not able

to coherently think about and execute your plans. At Regent Group we are transforming our human capital strategy.

Leaders need a willingness to render humble service. Genuinely great leaders are willing, and occasionally demand, to perform any sort of labour that they would ask another to do for them. My father said many times, ‘Son, if you cannot do a particular piece of work, do not go and ask somebody else. If you do not have the technical ability to do it, that is a different matter. But if you believe that you are bigger than somebody else, you are never going to be successful.’

Expectation of pay for what you know instead of what you do is an issue. ‘If you think that just by knowing rather than doing you can be successful, you will be shipwrecked,’ Dad said.

Dad believed in creation, not competition. ‘If you ever want to compete,’ he said, ‘compete with yourself. The leader who fears that one of his followers will take his position, will never become a leader. The able leader trains everybody, makes everybody perform and wants everybody to become successful so that the whole organisation becomes successful.’

Dad also said that if you do not have imagination, that is the end. He said imagination is key; without it, nothing comes. I am recording this book and sharing it with colleagues to turn it into text. I am writing during Covid-19 and all the technology that is bringing it to fruition is enabled by somebody else’s imagination.

Dad said the leader who claims all the honour for the work of his followers and has selfish behaviours is not a leader. It is interesting to

talk about selfishness. I was an only child and my parents gave me everything. Dad was aware that I had grown up a bit selfish because everything was given to me. This was an area of development that I needed to work through.

Dad said disloyalty never gets us anywhere; perhaps this should have come at the head of the list. A leader who is not loyal to his colleagues and followers marks them as being of less value than the dust on the earth. Disloyalty is something Dad had no time for at all; if someone was disloyal, that was the end of that relationship. That does not mean he was angry with them. He used to say loyalty is like a glass, and once it is broken you cannot put it back together, you are better off moving away from negativity. If you pick up disloyalty from anyone, or if you feel disloyal, you must walk away.

The emphasis on title... I am this, I am that, I am a leader... this does not mean anything. In all organisations you need titles, but that does not mean anything to the execution of plans. Dad said that in order to execute plans, you need the tools of application. You should be able to apply yourself and you should be able to take advice from people and find new ways of promoting yourself, that is the only way you can achieve the path you want to achieve.

Some other ideas he explained, especially coming from Sri Lanka, included his view that if you have an unfavourable background, that should never stop you, but you cannot ignore the fact that it will have an impact. That is something he talked about and said to make sure those things do not come to hinder you. I do not want to dwell on this, but he said that to me, and it had an impact.

If you do not have a well-defined purpose it is exceedingly difficult to execute a plan. He came from an extremely poor family. He could not do his A-levels until he was 40, and yet he continued to study. He did law and wanted to become a lawyer, but eventually the war started, and he could not do that. He talked about the idea that the value of education was not so much in the knowledge it delivers, but in the knowledge effectively and persistently applied.

Men and women are paid not for what they know but for what they do with what they know. I am now undertaking my own research about the knowing versus doing gap. I am about to embark on my PhD project to really understand why half the undergraduate students who are taking business disciplines are not able to create business in an entrepreneurial manner. The people taking marketing degrees will understand every law about marketing but will not be able to achieve and see results. Why is that? That is an area of interest I am exploring.

Lack of self-discipline is something else Dad talked about. He mentioned eating proper food, maintaining good habits, and proper breathing, among other things. Then I never understood, but he used to tell me the importance of breathing. Now, when I do more research, I can understand these ideas; we can live without food, but we cannot live without proper breathing. ‘Anything that is wrongly used is bad,’ Dad said, ‘just as being at school and spending too much time with friends is an issue if things get out of proportion. Then you will not be able to achieve your plan,’ he said. ‘Procrastination’ is a word he used many times.

Lack of control is also something he believed wrecked many people’s experience. Many people have lost their positions, their

wealth, everything, because they were not able to control their emotions. Some human emotions are incredibly difficult to control if you have setbacks, but they must be managed.

Dad talked about the wrongful selection of associates in business. This is an area where we spent a lot of time and now I have come to understand. You have got to believe you will have the right associates; if you attract the wrong ones it is because you are thinking in a particular way. You also need the ability to cooperate with others; you must be able to work with people.

Finally, you should never have ego. ‘Ego,’ Dad said, ‘is incredibly bad and with it you are not going to make any progress in your life. These qualities serve as red lights that warn others to keep away for the sake of their own success.’

To wrap up this planning chapter, the message is that once you set a goal, once you want to achieve certain things, you have got to take action. Dad never gave up; when he came up with a plan, there may have been many setbacks, but he would always say, ‘Let us make another plan,’ then, ‘Let us make another plan.’ Sometimes Mum would tease him and ask what next. He would say his previous plan was not good, so he was coming up with another.

Dad said he was never able to come up with the right plan because he was imperfect. ‘If you are perfect,’ he said, ‘you create perfect plans, but clearly when you are imperfect your plans will be imperfect. Over time, as your awareness increases, your plans will get better and better, you will achieve better results, and you will reach your goals.’



## CHAPTER 10

### PERSISTENCE

Persistence is an essential feature of the procedure of translating desire into success. ‘The basis of persistence is the power of will.’ This is what Hill wrote in his own chapter on Persistence, much of which I seek to explore here. Will is an intellectual tool that humans have, and in order for us to develop persistence, we have to develop the skill called will.

When I was young, whenever there was a setback at school or I was not able to get into a particular team or perform in a drama, Dad told me that I must have the will; if you want something you have got to keep going. ‘Willpower and desire, when properly combined, make an irresistible combination,’ Hill said, ‘and that is where humans accumulate great success.’

Sometimes, Dad used to say, people you meet will appear ruthless or unpleasant but instead they are probably just misunderstood. What they have is willpower, which they mix with persistence and desire

to ensure they attain what they want. Dad used Henry Ford as his example, as did Hill. Dad said that Ford had huge persistence because he had a desire – he wanted to replace horse-drawn carriages with a four-wheeled machine.

The majority of people are ready to throw their aim or purpose and give up at the first sign of misfortune. If you carry on despite all opposition, you will attain your goal, Hill wrote. But people who understand that are few and far between. Dad said if I really wanted to achieve what I wanted to achieve, from an incredibly young age, I would have to count my blessings. He said nobody achieves anything in their life if they have not temporarily failed. ‘If you give up, you are not going to get anywhere.’ He said this understanding is more important than your education.

During the war, as I have said before, doing my A-levels I enjoyed myself too much. Because of that, and the war, I did not do very well. Dad asked what I wanted to do and explained to me the importance of persistence. He said, ‘You really need to do what you want to do in your life, you need to plan and set your goals.’ That was a time when I actually struggled, because all my friends were going to university. That was hard and he really supported me during that time. He said, ‘Do what you really like to do and then you will achieve what you want to achieve.’ Then when I came to the UK, I continued to encounter problems, and he continued to speak to me about the value of persistence.

Just to build on this idea, any success generally involves the application of an understanding of the laws of nature. Those are the principles that Dad talked about.

Furthermore, the starting point of all achievement, as we have said before, is one of the Ds – desire. ‘Keep this constantly in mind,’ Dad said. And Hill wrote that weak desire brings weak results, just as a small amount of fire brings little heat. If you really want to achieve something and pump up the heat, then pump up the desire.

If you find yourself lacking in persistence, this weakness can be mended by building a stronger fire. You should have fire in your belly – and Dad had a reasonably big belly himself – he used to say, look at mine, I have a lot of fire!

Fortune gravitates towards humans that have the mindset to attract it, just as water gravitates to the ocean. This was a household story and Dad always talked about how things come to you. He said he had a remote control to get what he wanted to attract. I did not understand that, but it was true – throughout his life he attracted whatever he wanted. He always said that water goes back to the ocean, not the other way around. It always flows in one direction and likewise success flows to the one that accumulates it, as easily as water flows downhill.

Hill said that there exists a great unseen stream of power that may be compared to a river, except that one side flows in one direction carrying all who get into that side of the stream onward and upward to success. The other side flows in the opposite direction, carrying all who are unfortunate enough to get into it downward into misery, and sometimes, sadly, towards poverty.

Poverty is something that is not given to us, we create it. I think Bill Gates recently said that if you are born into poverty, without wealth, opulence, or success, that’s okay; that is not your mistake or problem.

But if you die in poverty, that is your problem, because you can choose to change it.

Every man or woman that has accumulated great success and fortune has recognised the existence of this truth. It is about one's thinking process. Dad said that you become what you think about. If you think that you are going to become something, you will.

But you have a choice. If you are on the side of the stream of power in Hill's analogy, you must make sure you continue to travel forward and do not fall into the other side. It can serve you only through application. Merely reading or passing judgement in one way or another will in no way benefit you. He said there are so many people that talk about these things but do not achieve them. Only a small percentage of the people that you look at in the world understand this concept intellectually and emotionally. Lots of people understand it intellectually and see that it makes sense, but when you look at their results, nothing is changing. When you understand this emotionally, after accepting it intellectually, then your life will start to change.

Hill talked about how poverty and riches often change places. When riches take the place of poverty, the changes were brought about through well-conceived and executed plans. These things do not come without planning, without thinking, without action. 'Poverty needs no plan,' Hill said, 'it needs no one to aid it because it is bold and ruthless.'

This is especially true in Sri Lanka, where it is accepted that only a small minority have been successful, and some have not achieved success using the natural laws for reasons that we all know. Riches are

shy and timid – they must be attracted. That can only be done through your thinking.

With persistence, no matter how slowly, you know that success will come. You are taking certain steps and doing certain things to achieve the goal. We define success as the progressive realisation of a worthy goal. When you are progressing, you will hit many roadblocks, but persistence is the way through.

‘Those who have cultivated the habit of persistence seem to enjoy insurance against failure,’ Hill said; that is a beautiful way to put it. We take insurance for our cars, for our lives, so when things go wrong, we look to our insurance policy. It is the same if we develop a habit of persistence. No matter how many times we are defeated, we finally arrive towards the top of the ladder. Sometimes it appears that there is a hidden guide, whose duty it is to test men through all sorts of discouraging experience. ‘Those who pick themselves up after defeat and keep on trying, arrive,’ Hill wrote.

These ideas are so valuable in our daily lives, we just need to develop them. The purpose of me talking about these ideas in the context of *The Power of Learning from DAD* is that these are lessons that all our parents share. If you take a moment to stop and reflect upon what your parents told you, they have said things that are so valuable. This is no longer science, but a story line I have experienced.

With every failure comes an advantage. I cannot disagree with that statement from Dad. In 1990, the biggest failure for me was not being able to enter university in Sri Lanka because of the war and my indulgence in fun. I lost everything and needed to come to

England with just £100, after having had a great life. I needed to start everything again in the UK, and I started out as a cleaner working in a psychiatric hospital. It was a depressing experience, but I drew on what I had learned about persistence.

People who persist, who do not accept defeat, who persistently apply their desires, are the ones who succeed. The key is persistence. Never give up in the face of discouragement. It is important to be persistent without violating the rights of others.

Dad talked about musicians and said there is not a single musician who has become successful without persistence. Sometimes the successful ones are not necessarily the best – there might be others who can perform or compose music better, but the reason they do not get there and maybe a mediocre person does is persistence. Countless others have come and gone because they lacked the courage to keep on keeping on it.

Persistence is a state of mind that is extremely important and very much like any other emotion we might have, therefore it can be cultivated. It is like building muscles. If you want to have physical muscles, you need regular exercise. Persistence is the same. So many things in life are driven by the mind – the conscious and the subconscious, as Hill taught us. We need to understand that.

Like all states of mind, persistence is based on definite causes. This is where cause and effect comes in. You must have the cause and then persistence will come – action, reaction. We are going back every time throughout this book to the laws of nature. These laws were the same a thousand years ago, and they will be the same for the next thousand

years. We do not have the ability to change them; we can ignore them, but they can never be amended.

This is where definiteness of purpose is important, knowing what one wants in the first place. A strong motive forces one to meet difficulties head on. Of course, you develop the state of mind without doing anything, because it is an effect, a state of mind. What you can do, is clearly work on the cause, the action part. How do you create the action? You go backwards, and that action is linked to your subconscious mind. If we refer back to the stick person, we have the subconscious mind, we have our paradigms and our habits, and we make those things work in our favour.

Hill said that desire is one cause that is comparatively easy to acquire. To maintain persistence means pursuing the object of intense desire. Self-reliance is another cause – believing in one’s ability to carry out the plan and to follow the plan through persistence. You have got to believe in certain plans, while knowing that not all plans are perfect, and you will need to take action.

He said knowledge is important: if you do not know, you will be guessing. Knowing that one’s plans are sound based on experience and observations encourages persistence. Guessing, instead of knowing, destroys persistence. Dad used to say, ‘Never guess, never assume. You can use your intuition, but do not guess.’ Guessing is shallow; successful people have developed the ability to use their intellectual faculties, such as intuition and reasoning. We have six intellectual factors, one of which is intuition – some people call it the sixth sense. You can call it any name, but what really matters is to understand what it does.

Intuition was given to humans when they were in the caves to make sure they could pick up on an animal about to attack. They cannot hear the animal, they cannot see the animal, but they can feel it is present. That is where intuition comes from. Then humans advanced, and intuition has continued to develop.

Hill also points to sympathy – the harmonious cooperation with others. Alongside willpower and the habit of concentrating one's thoughts on a plan, it is so important. Willpower is a beautiful thing. It relates to the Hindu tradition of meditation we are taught from a very young age. I have sat in meditation at a very deep level and participated in the Hindu rituals, which are great. What I did not understand at the time was that it was building my ability to concentrate and strengthening my will. Sitting looking at a dot on the wall is one way of building concentration, but there are many others. Dad talked about the value of concentrating on your breathing.

Persistence is a direct result of habit, which is why we call it a paradigm; it sits in your subconscious mind. The mind absorbs and becomes part of the daily experience upon which it feeds. Fear, the worst of all enemies, can be effectively cured by forced repetition of acts of courage.

Rollo May, the distinguished psychiatrist, puts this quite nicely, 'The opposite of courage in our society is not cowardice, it is conformity,' he says. We conform because we are programmed to do so by DNA from our ancestors, and by our environment. In the early stages, our subconscious mind is wide open, so everything around us is absorbed. By the time we become teenagers and adults, we just look to our environment. I grew up in an environment in Sri Lanka that is so



different to the one I am living in now. The war did not help, and when you compare it to the United Kingdom, one of the best places in the world to live, it was profoundly different.

The environment in many ways was different, and obviously immigration makes a difference. Dad always said people should integrate when they move to a new country. They can respect their heritage and culture, but they must integrate. This was something he was passionate about. ‘That was programmed into me,’ he said, ‘When you are in Rome, be a Roman.’

We respected our country and we respected our queen. He was so grateful that we as a family were able to come and live in this country, that we were accepted as refugees because of the civil war in Sri Lanka.

My parents had a British education and loved the British heritage and culture. My mum’s father had worked for the British when Sri Lanka was a colony. But in 1948, Sri Lanka became an independent country. It is sad that the communities did not always live in harmony together, and today Tharshiny and I have an initiative called Global Unity Forum, focused on bringing those two communities together. So far, our focus has been on committing to hosting joyful dinners of unity in London, but we plan to take these events all over the world; there is a long, long way to go.

‘The symptoms of a lack of persistence are many,’ Hill said, ‘and procrastination is one of them.’ Dad used to say that procrastination is often about giving to people, because that is often what is put off. He said when you have £100 you can give to charity, and when you have £1m you can give to charity. If you can do, you can give.

Dad always hated to see people blaming others for their mistakes. He never, ever blamed anybody and whenever I used to try and blame others, he would tell me to stop and look at myself. He said it is never somebody else's fault; it is your fault. I could not grasp that for a long time and, even now, there are times when I will say something was Tharshiny's fault, not mine. Tharshiny and I have a fantastic relationship, but there are ups and downs as there are in every relationship. It is never her fault, it is always mine, but that habit stays close.

The habit of neglecting to move on a great idea is key; just go and do it, rather than thinking about it. Various books have said what Dad said, which is stop using the words 'I wish X would happen'. Instead, say, 'That will happen'. I am shifting my vocabulary and my thinking, because if you really want something, you need to believe in it.

We all have the power to implement changes that may lead to opulence and riches. Dad believed in that and he told me as a child that I should always have the habit of living in opulence, which does not always mean money, but riches. People say you need to experience poverty; he never believed in that.

Dad said, 'Never fear criticism: if somebody says you have failed to create plans or something is not working, just do not listen to them.' As soon as people fear criticism, people give up, and that is another symptom of lack of persistence. Often, people refuse to take chances in business because they fear the criticism that may follow if they fail. The fear becomes bigger than the desire for success. People are scared.

As long as your doing is in line with your goal, as long as you are

respecting the laws of nature, as long as you are not berating somebody else's space, then it is okay, you can just go ahead and achieve your goals. Dad said people should always have a purpose, have a plan and not bring any negativity. Have the right group of people around you and, if people pull you down, just do not entertain them.

Dad used to borrow from Shakespeare when he used to say, 'To thine own self be true, and then it must follow as the night the day, thou cannot be beholden to any man.' That is a nice way to put it.

# CHAPTER 11

## INFLUENCE

**W**hen it comes to influence, Dad always said there is no reason to influence others. This is such an important statement. When we talk about influence, we talk about influencing ourselves. That sometimes sounds a bit strange given what we have heard about the need to influence others: our bosses, partners, community. ‘But that is not what influencing is all about,’ Dad said.

The means by which we can influence others sits with our subconscious mind. Dad did not ever use those words directly – he said it sits within. I am going to talk in this chapter about some of the scientific and psychological evidence around this and relate it to stories Dad talked about.

The term influence comes from us impressing an idea upon ourselves. It is a self-administered process that reaches our mind, firstly through the five senses, and then we need to bring it down to our

subconscious mind by constant repetition. The dominating thoughts that one permits to remain in the conscious mind, whether negative or positive, are immaterial. The principle of bringing influence involuntarily means it must reach the subconscious mind to influence our thoughts. No thought, whether negative or positive, can enter the subconscious mind without the repetition and internalisation that Dad talked about, with the exception of thoughts picked up from outside.

Stated differently, and using Hill's words, all those impressions that are perceived through the five senses are stopped by the conscious mind and may be either passed on to the subconscious mind or rejected. The conscious mind is inductive and deductive, while the subconscious mind is completely deductive. It is an outer guard to approaches to the subconscious. In the conscious mind you have intellectual factors – the reasoning, the intuition, the memory, the will and so on. This means in practice we may not have a choice, a say over certain things, and some people may not have access to those intellectual factors.

Nature has created the human to have complete control over the material that reaches his or her subconscious mind through the five senses. However, in the great majority of cases, people do not exercise it, which explains why so many go through life focusing on the areas they would like to achieve, but they do not achieve, and then they are confused.

Dad liked to tell the story of a fertile garden plot in which weeds grow in abundance if the seeds of more desirable crops are not planted. 'There are two plots of land in a neighbourhood,' he said. 'One is beautiful, bordered with flowers, trees and greenery. The

other is just weeds, despite the same land and the same weather.’ He took the idea from Hill, who said that an individual may voluntarily feed the subconscious mind on thoughts of a creative nature or, by neglect, permit thoughts of a disruptive nature to find their way into the rich garden of the mind.

When we understand this concept, we need to mix these ideas with emotions, mix feelings with our words. If you repeat something a million times, day-by-day – ‘I am getting better,’ for example – without emotions or faith, you will experience no desirable results.

The best example is back in Sri Lanka. Detentions are given to students who have to write, hundreds of times, ‘I am not going to come late’, or ‘I am never going to be naughty in class again’. You write for about an hour, 200 times, with the assumption being that with repetition, behaviour will change. But the teachers are not explaining to those students how they can change. If you do not mix faith and feeling into that repetition, nothing will change.

This is equally relevant when we talk about some of the Hindu rituals. We go in, we do not understand a single word of what is going on, but we repeat the mantras over and over. There is no emotion attached to it. These mantras have a huge amount of meaning and if you can apply emotion, then you can take them into your subconscious mind. If they are well mixed with emotion, that is the name of the game. Dad said that by just saying empty words, you will get nowhere.

This is worth repeating. Plain, unemotional words do not influence the subconscious mind and will not deliver results. That is influencing; you influence your own ideas and then the psychic kicks in and emotion

creates action. You will take action, and your action will generate reactions that will change your results. That is influencing.

Dad always told me not to become discouraged if I could not immediately control my emotions. Why can we sometimes not control emotions? Because we are programmed to do things in a certain way. I am 50 years old and I still cannot do this. When I have overturned all my habits, then I will achieve what I want to achieve. I am making huge progress, but there is a long way to go. I do not think you will ever learn it, because once you get there, you will want to go even further. ‘Remember, there is never something for nothing; no such thing as a free lunch,’ Dad used to tell me.

‘The ability to reach and influence your subconscious mind has its price, and you must pay that price,’ Hill said. You cannot cheat. The price of the ability to influence your subconscious mind is everlasting persistence, applying emotions over and over again to what you want to achieve.

Dad said wisdom and cleverness are not what attract success; broadly speaking, wisdom and cleverness will not cut the mustard. Moreover, the method plays no favourites, to use Hill’s words. Nature does not know who is good, who is bad, what our relationships are. This method will work for one person as effectively as it will work for another. Dad used to tell me there is the Prime Minister of this country, myself, and the President of the United States. We are exactly the same, but they are able to think differently to me – that is what gives them the advantage.

Where there is a failure, it is down to the individual, not the method.

When we have experienced temporary failure, it does not mean the method does not work. The method has not failed; we did not apply it correctly. If at first you do not succeed, keep on going until you do. Then set bigger, more exciting goals.

Your ability to influence is directly related to your capacity to concentrate. Concentration is essential. It is an intellectual tool, facilitated by will – something we have already mentioned many times – and desire, the first D of dad. Until that desire becomes a burning obsession, and you make the connection by influencing yourself, you will not begin to see results.

Visualise the physical appearance of your success, and by impressing that physical appearance on your mind, you will be able to turn it into reality. As Bob Proctor said, ‘Thoughts become things. If you see it in your mind, you will hold it in your hand.’

‘Do not wait for a clear plan to come to you,’ Dad said. ‘If you wait for it, it will not come... you need to take action now. You need an organised plan in order to achieve. But do not just wait for it, that is procrastination.’

‘Look out for viable plans,’ he used to tell me, ‘and when you come up with them, put them into action immediately. They will appear, because that is how the subconscious works, and how nature works. If you start getting emotionally involved and you believe you have got it right, suddenly an idea will come. If an idea comes and you ignore it, that is not good. Plans flash into your mind and you must act. Think about that.’



And Dad used to give another simple example. Imagine you are driving a car and you want to go to your friend's house. You have to figure out which way you want to go. At some point, it will just flash into your mind, and you will take a right or left, then perhaps encounter traffic, or not get there on time. This is a silly little story, but nevertheless, you will get a flash and when that flash comes, take action.

Hill said that this flash, that comes into your mind, is what some people might call a sixth sense. People use all sorts of terminology for what is actually inspiration. 'A direct message comes to you to act on and failure to do this will be fatal to your success,' Dad said.

Use your intuition to create a plan for the success that you are willing to reach. There is no reason not to accept your own reason. Reasoning means more development; your reasoning faculty may amaze you. Do not be lazy, as my daughters constantly tell me now.

Dad said you have got to visualise and see success, which is something Hill taught as well. When you see it, think about what you are doing – delivering that service, that merchandise, that you intend to give in return for the success that you are seeking. This idea of fusing from that future to the present date is so important. There are lots of psychologists and management thinkers that have also talked about this.

All of us are seeking this knowledge; we know it works. We know there are two sets of people, one which achieves results and the other, which does not. We also know it is nothing to do with education, qualifications or where they come from. But we give this little thought.

Let us concentrate on that. As students, there is a chance we will learn much that we may not have known before. While I am writing, I am learning and bringing Dad's ideas to the fore, while mixing them with current management thinking. Dad said you must have an attitude of humility. This is also where some of the learned management thinkers have coined the phrase, 'The learners will conquer the world.' The so-called learned will be left behind, particularly with technology, particularly with what we are now experiencing with Covid-19. The world will shift, and, in that shift, the learners will become incredibly successful.

If you choose to follow some of these instructions and ideas, and if you neglect and refuse to follow others, that is okay. But you need to understand the whole concept of influencing as an internal mechanism, not external. Think about Mahatma Gandhi, who did not influence millions by doing anything externally.

It is important when we are influencing these ideas, that we create the right environment for us. 'Remember, son,' Dad said, 'when you are going through these ideas, it is all about that emotionalised feeling and a handover to the subconscious mind. Faith is the strongest and most productive of emotions.'

Most people are sceptical of new ideas when they are first introduced. In business, if you offer someone the opportunity to buy a business, the first thing most will ask is why it is for sale, what is wrong with it? They are being sceptical and not understanding that the question should be whether what is on offer is attractive to them. Do you want it? Please think about that.

‘When you talk to somebody about an idea, many will just worry about what others are doing. It is nothing to do with others,’ Dad said. You are attracting it because you have given emotions to it, whether good or bad. It could be a business, the purchase of a house, a relationship, anything. If you attracted it to yourself but then you ask someone else’s opinion, and they are asking why you are doing it and why it is for sale, then everyone is confused.

But if you follow the methods we are talking about, you will no longer feel sceptical. Instead, you will have belief, which you can convert into absolute faith. Then you will have arrived at the point where you can truly say, I am the master of my fate. Dad used to say to me, ‘You are the master of your fate, and, Mahan, son, you are the captain of your soul.’

I did not understand that; I was always seeking answers externally. Our education system is all about teaching things from the outside in, and that is why I have come to believe that the education system should be complemented, not supplemented, by inside-out. Because it is still important to learn the facts and unlock the secrets of the ages found in books. We have got to learn that, absolutely. But the challenge is the next step, which we have not really taken care of.

It is not that difficult once people are willing to understand rather than reject these ideas. Many management thinkers have said, ‘Man is the master of his own destiny.’ But Dad said that most of them fail to say why he is the master, and how he can become the master. That needs further explanation. The reason that man may be the master of his own status is exactly what we are talking about. Think about

what you want to achieve, internalise it, and then, bang, you will attract things.

In Sri Lanka one of the A-Levels we studied in 1989 was logic. But what is logic? Logic dictated that we could not fly. People said to the Wright brothers, 'What are you talking about? You are two bicycle mechanics and you are saying you are able to fly? Don't be ridiculous, just go and sort your bikes out.' That is the kind of scepticism you will sometimes get, and you need to understand, as we all really need to understand, that sometimes it is illogical.

Just to restate this, when we say influence or influencing, we are not talking about influencing others by our words or actions. Sometimes you think about giving rewards to people to influence them to make certain decisions. I have made that mistake many, many times. But we have got to be in harmony. Sometimes as human beings we behave one way when internally we believe something else. If we are not in harmony between our conscious mind, our feelings in the subconscious mind and the way our body is acting, then we are not going to achieve the results we want.

How many millions of times over my 25-year working history as a professional, when I gave a pay rise have I thought it would motivate that person or encourage them to do something? I am not in harmony there, because I am just taking an action and trying to exert influence.

This is a difficult concept to grasp, so is what I'm saying here, I just need to know what I am trying to achieve, to be emotionally involved, to work within the law and try not to do any harm to anybody? I should not have any concept of envy or jealousy, not

expect anything from anyone and just work for myself and push my ideas into my subconscious mind within the natural laws, then the results will come? That seems to be the law of creation that we are trying to achieve.

Dad said that, but he did not completely practise it. He did not necessarily practice everything that I write here to the letter. He shared these ideas, but if I go back and look at his results and actions, just like all human beings, he made mistakes. I too have made mistakes, but it is good to talk about these theories. That is what I am trying to achieve here, especially for my own two daughters. One day, my daughters will read this book and they will be able to relate, and that is my motivation.

I would like to wrap up this chapter by considering how influence exists as a process within ourselves. It is a way to communicate our ideas to nature and the outside world, and to other human beings. To be truly successful, we must share our ideas, commit each of these steps, get attention and create interest.

The primary law for influencing is that every action has its equal and opposite reaction. That is the fundamental law of cause and effect; every cause has an effect and if you only work on the effect, it will not work. If you want to be successful, you cannot do that without focusing on the cause and then the effect will come.

This is such a beautiful lesson, where the whole idea of influence has been taken to a completely different level, away from influencing others with words that are not in harmony with your thoughts: saying to people this is a wonderful idea, while inside you think something

else; saying to people you must follow this policy, while inside you do not really agree. That is not going to give you long term success.

Think about political initiatives and promises given to communities, and whether those promises were given in harmony. If you really want long-lasting results then the thoughts, the feelings and the actions should be in harmony. That is the essence of influencing yourself.

## CHAPTER 12

### FRIENDS

**D**ad had an interesting definition of friends that I want to set out before I start the chapter. He said friends are not just the friends we talk about, as our human one-to-one relationships; they can be individuals, communities, even countries. That is true when you think about it. There are friends of particular groups: charities, political parties, associations, and schools. As a business, we have friends as well.

Countries talk about being shoulder-to-shoulder, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Those two countries are friends. So, friends may be human being-to-human being, or organisation-to-organisation, but wherever relationships develop, they can create success.

There are friendships created with community associations and political associations. In particular, there are friends of political parties,

who make a huge difference to the success of those political parties in the United Kingdom. I am quite happy to say that I am a friend of the Conservative Party, and my dad was a Conservative who believed in the free market.

Friends can be described as the driving force, and a friend in need is a friend indeed. The driving force is friendship, which can carry you forward. You need to know who your friends are. Dad said there are lots of people who want to be friends with you. ‘Please,’ he said, ‘accommodate them, support them and help them, whether they are communities, charities, companies or individuals that want to be friends with you. But you have got to choose who you want to be friends with. The people that you want to be friends with are those you can learn from, and those who will support and challenge rather than continuously agree with you.’

That always stayed in my mind. Dad highlighted the importance of being a friend to everybody; doing the best you can, helping everyone unconditionally, without expectations. But if someone asks you who your friends are, you need to be careful in choosing those friends.

I am 50 this year and, to be perfectly honest, I did not appreciate this when I was younger. I was friends with everybody. But now, on reflection, I look back and I have met so many people. In my first 20 years in Sri Lanka, I met some great friends and some friends that my parents did not approve of. Over the years, this has been a great learning curve for me. There are some friendships that have blossomed into huge, true friendships over the past 30 years, as well as friends that today I would define more as companions.



True friends are those that stand by you in your darkest hours. They are not just there for the fun and laughter, but also they are there for the support and challenge. Now, understanding the laws of nature, I see that you actually attract those in your frequency and if you are on the right frequency, you attract the right friends. If you are not attracting the right friends in life, you only need to believe that the frequency is different and move on. With increasing awareness, you will move up the ladder of your frequency and you can see things better. ‘The higher you go,’ Dad used to say, ‘it is less crowded and you can see things better because the air is fresh and the view is clear.’

Coming back to the UK, this wonderful nation is for me and my family – my mum and dad, Tharshiny and the girls, a best friend. Since coming here, we have made some great friends. This country gave us everything. When I came here as a student 30 years ago, this country gave me asylum seeker and then refugee status. For that I am incredibly grateful, and so if somebody asks me who my best friend is, I say the United Kingdom. It is not just me that is grateful, but my entire generation and my entire family. In the last 30 years, since Tharshiny and I met here as two Sri Lankan refugees, this country has given us everything. The Pankaj family is definitely a friend of the United Kingdom.

Our girls have heard what we have been through and what this country has given us. It will not stop with our generation; it is absolutely channelling down. My girls take this country as their home and their patriotic values mean they will do everything for this country and in the national interest. I always want to emphasise that Dad himself said he was a friend of the United Kingdom. Dad studied with the British

before independence in 1948. He remembered independence and had his own views on whether Sri Lanka should have had independence or not, but he had so much respect for the British, as did my mum.

Going back to friendship as the driving force, Dad always said that power is essential for success in any form. Plans are important, but without sufficient power, plans cannot be put into action. I am not talking about power in the context of political power. ‘Power can be defined as organised and intelligently directed knowledge,’ Hill said. Power refers to organised effort, sufficient to enable an individual to transmit desire.

Hill wrote that organised effort is produced through the coordination of effort of two or more people, so that is where the friendship comes in, when those people work towards a definite end in a spirit of harmony. It is not just friendship between one human being and another, but can be at different levels, as I have set out before. Hill believed that Power is required for the accumulation of success and necessary for the retention of that success after it has been accumulated.

Let us consider how power can be acquired if power is organised knowledge. Let us examine sources of knowledge. Dad talked about infinite intelligence and how this source of knowledge might be attracted through the procedure described by the creative imagination, which is a concept that Hill talked about. So, you have creative imagination in a small percentage of people who are able to do that. But most of the population works on this accumulated experience, or our environmental experience. The accumulated experience of

humans may be found in any society – in the field of science and in practically every other walk of life; humans are gathering, classifying and organising new facts daily.

Dad talked about knowledge being acquired from any of these sources. It may be converted into power by organising it into definite plans and moving those plans forward through action. Action is absolutely essential; with no action, everything is a complete waste of time, he said.

Examination of these ideas is incredibly important. These are ideas that came from Hill, but which Dad often shared. Dad talked about the right friendship group – both human friendships and organisation to organisation friendship groups.

Dad came to the UK in 1994, Mum in 1992, and I in 1990. I met Tharshiny in 1996 and we will have been married 25 years in 2021. For the first two years, while we were engaged, we did not live together and then in 1998, under the Tamil tradition, we formally married. For me, the marriage began the day I met her and said I was going to be her partner forever. So that is going to be 25 years next year.

Life carried on, and in 2000, Mum and Dad were living their own life and Tharshiny was in the second year of doing her degree. I was the main breadwinner and Mum and Dad had their house and we had ours. We had a fantastic time and those wonderful evenings and dinners cannot be forgotten.

We were living hand to mouth, we spent what we earned. So, I needed to get an extra income while I was studying for my MBA. I was so grateful that my company, Prudential Financial Inc, sponsored me,

because I would not have had the money to do an MBA, just as I didn't have the money to do my undergraduate degree in 1990.

I came to the United Kingdom with £100 because that was all that my father could afford to give me at the time. As a refugee working for my pound in this country, I could not have paid to do an MBA. So, we needed extra money and I told Tharshiny I would go and get a Saturday job. I have never, in my 30 years of living in this country, taken any money from the government. I came as a student and took refugee status because the situation in Sri Lanka made it impossible for me to go back. My parents were pensioners when they came here and were looked after incredibly well by this country, particularly my mother who benefited a great deal from the wonderful NHS when she had heart problems. Dad, on the other hand, never went to hospital in his life until he left us in 2006.

I said to Tharshiny that we needed extra money; our credit card bills were stacking up. I saw an advert that said, 'Tutors needed.' I remember that day, early 2000 I believe, when Tharshiny was cooking and I decided I wanted to apply to teach accounting. I was a qualified accountant doing my MBA. She told me to go for it. The rest is history. I studied and I taught. I took all the books I could think of with me in the back of the car and I went to a place in Hendon and I taught. That was in 2000, and that first £20 I earned was spent on much-needed shopping the next day. And now, here we are, and our Regent Group business is on a journey to become a UK university very soon.

My parents valued their friendships enormously and my mum, in particular, had some great friends. One of her oldest friends was Miss Appleby, who she met when she was a young girl in Sri Lanka. Miss

Appleby was a missionary helping Sri Lanka to build and she stayed even after independence. There were so many British people who stayed in Sri Lanka to rebuild the country; Mum had some fantastic friends, as did we all.

Turning to my wife, Tharshiny, she is the most wonderful woman I have ever met, and my father was incredibly supportive of our relationship. Without Tharshiny, I would not be here. She has been with me through various things in my life and, while we are talking about friends, Tharshiny is my best friend. Obviously, my mum and dad and my girls are also my best friends. But today, with my dad not here, if I look back at the driving force, there is only one lady, and that is Tharshiny Pankaj.

Friendship is absolutely essential, whether it is with your wife or, for Regent Group, with our partners. We have some fantastic university partners, the University of Bolton in particular, and Professor George Holmes, who is taking us on this wonderful journey to university status.

Gaining power through this friendship group may be defined as a coordination of knowledge and effort in a spirit of harmony between two or more people for the attainment of a definite purpose. Hill wrote about these ideas as *Power of the Mastermind*, but Dad used the word friendship instead of mastermind. Dad said that when you have people around you who are equally passionate about what you want to achieve, they stimulate your ideas. Those people may not give you the answers, because they can only give opinions, but by talking with them you will formulate new ideas to take your own action. There is a fine line between advice, opinion and your own action; that is your own wisdom, or sixth sense.

Our definite purpose now is the creation of a UK university and with UK and US degree awarding powers. As individuals we do not have great power to achieve such a purpose, we need friendship groups.

Let us understand, these friendship groups are intangible, you cannot see them. You might have conversations, but you do not see them. These friendship groups can give you economic success or success in your human potential development. ‘There is obvious economic advantage if a person surrounds himself with advice, counsel and the cooperation of a group of human beings who are willing to lend themselves wholeheartedly to his endeavour,’ Hill said.

And Dad used to say that these forms of cooperation and alliance are at the heart of every great success story in history. Understanding this great trick will determine our success and fulfilment in life. But there is also another piece that is equally important. Economics without a balanced life has no value because you will not be happy.

Dad said no two minds ever come together without creating a third invisible force or intangible force that may be linked with a third mind. He also said that if two people get together, they can create more. This is an idea from Hill. I think Tharshiny and I are a typical example of this. We are incredibly different people – she is disciplined and can do pretty much anything she wants if she puts her mind to it. I am pretty much the opposite; I do not think I am disciplined, but I am beginning to learn. Whatever she says she wants to achieve, Tharshiny just does it. You only need look at where she was 20 years ago and look at her now, she is an athlete – she is an absolutely phenomenal figure who is able to achieve whatever she wants to achieve. She just has to decide what she wants to achieve; I am trying to learn from her.

Keep in mind the fact that there are only two elements in the universe – energy and matter. It is a well-known fact that matter can be broken down into millions of different molecules, atoms, or electrons. There are units of matter that may be isolated. Likewise, there are elements of energy too. The human mind is a form of energy, that is the bit I did not always understand.

Dad talked about how, if the minds of two people are coordinated in the spirit of harmony, a form of energy in each of their minds forms an affinity that constitutes a huge friendship. That is the definition of friendship – the harmony that you bring in. I think the friendship of families is something even greater. Dad said that if that harmony is there, you are friends – as an individual, as a family, as a company, as a country, or as a community. Your friends are your group. If your partner is one of your friends, then you are in harmony.

These friendship principles, or rather the economic feature of them, were first observed by the great thinkers in the 18th and 19th centuries. Hill wrote about them, and so did others. Hill said that nature's building blocks are available to humans, but there is energy involved in thinking. Our brain may be compared to an electric battery, he said.

We absorb energy, which then provides power, a driving force. It is a well-known fact that a group of electric batteries will provide more energy than a single battery. It is also a well-known fact that an individual battery will provide energy in proportion to the number and capacity of the cells it contains. The brain functions in a similar fashion. He said this accounts for the fact that some brains are more

efficient than others and leads to the significant statement that a group of brains coordinated in a spirit of harmony will provide more thought energy than a single brain. The group of electric batteries provides more energy than a single battery.

Through this metaphor of Hill's, it becomes immediately obvious that friendship groups are powerful. These mental powers are difficult to understand but, once you do understand, it can bring you great success. My dad had huge admiration for Mahatma Gandhi, as have I, and I have already mentioned him on numerous occasions. Many people think of Gandhi as an eccentric who wore basic clothing and made trouble for the British government. Our beloved Winston Churchill called him a half-naked fakir. Our prime minister Boris Johnson wrote about this in his book *The Churchill Factor*. In reality, Gandhi was not eccentric, but he was the most powerful man who ever challenged the British Empire.

So, where is the power? He had the power within his friendship group. Gandhi accomplished something unbelievable because he had the spirit of harmony for a limitless task. If you doubt that something is achievable, try to use one or two more people to cooperate in the spirit of harmony. Gandhi did it with 200 million people; that is the power of friendship.

Every man or woman who manages a business knows how difficult it is to get your team to work together in a spirit even remotely resembling harmony. 'The list of chief sources from which power may be attained is headed by intelligence,' Hill wrote. Another source of knowledge and accumulation of power is religion, and this book is



not a course on religion, I like to emphasise this wholeheartedly. No fundamental religion was described in the ideas that Dad passed on. This book is concerned with instructing the reader on how to transmute the definite purpose of the desire for success into success. That is what we are talking about, just as Hill was talking about the same themes, and others have done since. Dad said, ‘Read, think, reflect and then internalise, but especially read. Soon the entire subject will unfold, and you will see it in perspective.’

Success is shy and illusive, and the process of wooing success can be compared, and is not greatly different, from that used in wooing a woman that you love, Hill said. Power, to be successfully used in the pursuit of success, must be mixed with faith, desire and persistence, and it must be applied through a plan that must be set into action.

He wrote that every man or woman who has accumulated great success has recognised the existence of this stream of light that consists of one’s thinking process and the positive emotions of thoughts from the side of the stream that carries one to success and to that goal. ‘The negative emotions on the other side of the stream carry one down to the area where none of us wants to end up,’ he said.

Anyone can wish for success and most people do. If only a few more had a definite plan with a burning desire for success, for that is the only dependable means of achieving success, there would be more success, Hill wrote.

Dad, thank you for really explaining to me what friendship is, and for sharing these teachings. I have lots of companions, but when we talk of friends, the word has a specific meaning. I now understand that

if I am in the right frequency, I will attract the right people, just as a magnet can only attract metal and cannot attract rubbers. I like to be friends with everyone; I have lots of wonderful companions, and many true friends who offer support, challenge and that unconditional love.

Dad always said good friends are hard to come by, but when you have them, preserve them and respect them. There are examples in my past 30 years, when there have been ups and downs, where I have really relied and drawn on good friendships. Humans go through different phases, especially when starting life from scratch in a new country, when attractions change, and true friendships are built.

I now know in my own mind what the definition of friendship is. Dad, I can tell you, was my good buddy. He is not here, but I am enjoying time when we are not together, and particularly I am enjoying a Black Label that Dad and I used to have. He also left me with an exceptionally good friend indeed, and that is my lovely wife Tharshiny Pankaj.

## CHAPTER 13

### STIMULI

**T**he meaning of the word stimuli is linked to another word, transmit. In the English language, transmit means the transferring or changing of one element of a form of energy into another. The stimuli and emotions are linked to this, and Dad talked about this a lot when I was young, just as Hill wrote about these ideas. Dad used to say that there are various stimuli that the human mind responds to, whether it is high rates of thought energy, enthusiasm, creative imagination or an intense desire to achieve.

When I was at school, Dad said that my mind needed to be controlled within the environment as there were so many distractions. So, it is physical, emotional and intellectual stimuli that we are talking about in this chapter, even urges. Love is a stimulus, as is the burning desire for fame and power – we see many people chasing fame and power, and others chase money, though that tends to be less important than fame and power nowadays.

Having good friendship groups and working towards harmony is a stimulus. On the other hand, suffering, such as the experience of those that are persecuted, is also a stimulus. That is something I can talk about from the bad experiences I had in Sri Lanka. I was conscripted and suffered at the hands of one of the local militant groups. I do not want to dwell on that, but it was a major emotional drain on me at the time, and Dad provided great support.

Imagination and fear are also stimuli. Dad said that if you are afraid, suddenly you will do things that you may not do otherwise. All of these we need to understand.

Because of the ignorance around this subject, state of mind is generally associated with physical behaviour, and we overlook the improper influences to which most people have been subjected, the lure of fame, or the temptations of habits which may not serve us well. Essentially, we consider the physical side of things rather than the mental side. But, according to Hill, transmutation occurs when the mind switches from the thoughts of physical expression to thoughts of some other nature.

‘Most powerful human desires are wrapped up in these stimuli and, driven by desire, men and women are capable of developing keenness of imagination, courage, willpower, persistence and creative ability unknown to them at other times,’ Hill said. The key is unknown to them. Dad said, ‘There is genius wrapped up in you, son; you must unlock it.’ We simply need to use stimuli to unlock it.

‘So strong and compelling is desire,’ Hill said, ‘that some time men freely run the risk of life and reputation to indulge these stimuli.’

So many stories suggest that many great leaders, great politicians and great CEOs will ruin their lives because they are not able to manage stimuli.

Harvesting stimuli along other lines, however, means this motivating force maintains all its attributes of driving keenness of imagination, courage and so on, and those can be used as a powerful creative force. Whether working in literature, art, music or sport; those that succeed have managed to redirect their stimuli into great achievement.

To do so requires huge amounts of willpower. Hill said that desire should not be submerged or eliminated, but given an outlet through forms of expression that enrich the body, mind and spirit of humans. If not given this form of outlet, through transmutation, stimuli will seek outlets through purely physical channels. It is inherent in the human being, and if you do not find the right outlet for your passion, it will take the physical channel. A river may be dammed and under control for some time, but eventually it will find an outlet. The same is true of human emotions.

‘Passion may be submerged and controlled for a time but its very nature causes it to be ever seeking means of expression,’ Hill wrote. If not transmuted into some creative effort, it will find a less worthy outlet.

Scientific research demonstrates that men and women achieve most in their lives when they are able to manage and direct the various stimuli in a proper way. And Hill said that the men and women who have accumulated great fortune and success in literature, art, industry, architecture, professions, business and politics were all motivated at times, by the influence of love or passion.

On the subject of stimuli, Dad talked about genius developed through the sixth sense. The reality of the sixth sense has now been well established. Stephen Covey talked about the sixth sense and various authors have done the same; the sixth sense is the creative imagination. The faculty of creative imagination is one that the majority of people never use in their entire lifetime. Hill said that if it is used at all, it usually happens by accident. A relatively small number of people use it with purpose, and that then creates a genius within them that explodes into actions and results.

The faculty of creative imagination is the direct link between our mind and this unknown – that we call intelligence, that we are working with. Dad said if you are making decisions, thinking about things, the sixth sense is important. He would sit in a meeting with me and listen, he hardly talked, but he was a great listener and observer. Then he might say, ‘Something is telling me this is just talk, not action.’ Another time he would come to a meeting and say he just felt there was something out there we needed to tap into.

Hill wrote that when an idea or concept flashes into one’s mind through what might be called either a hunch, a calling, or a light bulb moment, it comes from creative intelligence, or sixth sense. And Dad said that infinite intelligence is there to be capped but must be developed using our intellectual factors and our subconscious mind. This is where intuition comes in. Dad said if you operate with just the five senses, you are not going to achieve anything substantive.

From the mind of some other person who has just released a thought, thoughts can be connected. Dad said that was an important

concept to understand, but it is not one that I have yet to fully grasp. He also talked about other people's subconscious storehouse, where friendship and the right relationships make a difference to creation.

Nothing inspires ideas more than the ability of the human being to have a creative imagination. When brain action has been stimulated through one or more of the stimuli we have been discussing, Hill said, it has the effect of lifting the individual far above the horizon of ordinary thought and permits them to look at things differently. These thoughts are not available on the lower plain, while one is engaged in the solution of problems of the usual routine. This is where I now believe in this problem/solution continuum, a concept I learned about at Stanford, of solving problems on a different plain.

When lifted to this higher level of thought, through any form of mind stimulation, an individual occupies the same position as one who has gone up in an aeroplane to a height from which they can see beyond the horizon line that limits vision. While on the ground they may not be able to see, but when above, they can see that while on this higher level of thought, the individual is not bound or hampered by any of the stimuli that sometimes curtail creativity.

Hill said you need to think beyond the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter and move to a world of thought in which day-to-day worries have been as effectively removed as the hills and the valleys; and other limitations on physical vision are removed when you rise in an aeroplane. You look at things differently.

While in an elevated position, the creative faculty of the mind is given freedom away from clutter. Dad said, 'Take the clutter away and

feel light.’ The way has to be clear for the sixth sense to function. It becomes receptive to ideas that could not otherwise reach the individual through the clutter. This hunch, this sixth sense, marks the difference between a genius and another individual. It can be developed, and an inside-out education system supports students to do that.

The creative faculty becomes more alert and receptive to vibrations originating outside the individual’s mind. The more this faculty is used, the more the individual relies upon it and makes demands upon it. Dad used to tell me the answers were inside me. I remember once going for an interview and Dad came with me and we sat in a coffee bar beforehand. He told me to just relax and go with what was inside me. I was struggling with all the difficult questions they might ask me and worrying a great deal; he said, it is all inside you.

‘The creative faculty becomes more alert and receptive to vibrations originating outside the individual’s subconscious the more that the faculty is used,’ Hill wrote. The great artists – writers, musicians, poets – became great because they acquired a habit of relying upon this little voice that speaks from within through the faculties of creative imagination, he said. This is well known to people who have keen imaginations, as their best ideas come through these little voices.

We have all had those little voices, at different levels of awareness. At times we just ignore them, and we do not follow up. If you do not take action today on those, that is it, it is forgotten. That is where the whole concept of luck comes in; the readiness to take an opportunity. The voice came, asking you to do something, but you did not do it.



Great orators and great singers often close their eyes before they perform as a means of embracing that creative imagination inside. Dad taught me to look inside in the same way.

The reasoning faculty of the mind is often faulty because it is largely guided by our accumulated experience, whether we call that habits or paradigms. That accumulated experience originates from DNA and from our environment, and not all knowledge accumulated that way is accurate. ‘Ideas received through the creative faculties are much more reliable,’ Hill said.

I have an incredibly open mind about religion because my mum was Christian and then became Hindu. My grandparents were really good Hindus but respected all religions. I respect every other race, and I respect people regardless of the language they speak, beliefs they have, the school they went to, or colour of their skin. From an incredibly young age, my experience and my learning from my parents was about accepting every human.

There were times in Sri Lanka when you could not go to a particular person’s house because of the caste system, which I did not understand at all. One of my best friends came from one of those families, but I would go there and have a great time. Then some members of the family would say I should not be going there. But my parents defended me and let me carry on. In that environment, they really helped me to develop acceptance. Now Tharshiny and I absolutely live and breathe that approach; we have launched the Global Unity Forum to bring different communities together in Sri Lanka first but expanding into other places.

The difference between the genius and the ordinary is that the genius works through his faculties of creative imagination. Medicine is a great example of where imagination is so important. There are methods that you can develop to stimulate your mind so that it vibrates on a higher average plain. Concentrating and keeping a picture of what you want to achieve are key.

There is plenty of reliable evidence that the faculty of creative imagination exists. I am combining personal experience and insights from Dad with things I have read. This evidence is there from men and women who have become leaders in their respective callings, without extensive education.

You have to be careful here, because when we talk about education we are talking about this outside-in education, studying for GCSEs, A-levels, degrees, even doctorates. This is not necessarily education in its entirety. Abraham Lincoln was a leader who achieved greatness through his faculties of creative imagination. It is proven that sometimes the traditional education system is not linked to the great achievements that human beings have made.

History is full of stories of great leaders whose achievements can be directly linked to the influence of their partners, male or female, and stimulation of the mind. Napoleon Bonaparte always talked about how he was influenced by his wife to achieve great things even though I may not agree with all his actions.

It is important to understand this but unfortunately only geniuses have made the discovery, Hill said. Others have accepted the experience of this emotion without discovering one of its major potentials, which

accounts for the great number of others as compared to the limited number of geniuses.

Dad always told me I was developing, and I might achieve some of my goals in my fifties and sixties. I wanted success immediately, but he said it was a journey. I read about that now, and Hill talked about that. He researched more than 25,000 men and women who succeeded in an outstanding way and found that they seldom succeeded before age 40 and often did not strike their real pace until they were beyond the age of 50 or 60.

Everything is driven by emotions. There is a difference between feelings and emotions. Feelings are a sense of acknowledgement of where our vibration is, while emotion is deeper. The most powerful of human emotions are some of the stimuli, including the attraction of a partner. There are other mind stimuli, but it is the greatest force if directed properly. A mind stimulant is any influence that will either temporarily, or permanently, increase the vibration of thought.

Hill said we should encourage the presence of these emotions as the dominating thoughts in our mind and discourage the presence of all destructive emotions. The mind is the creation of habits and it preys upon the dominating thoughts. Through the faculty of willpower, one can discourage the presence of any emotion and encourage the presence of any other.

‘Control of the mind through the power of will, is not difficult,’ Dad told me. It was very difficult for me when I was young and it is still difficult, even though Dad said it was not and that it came from persistence and habits. Habits are there and are incredibly difficult

to change. The secret of control lies in understanding the process of transmutation. Whenever any negative emotion presents itself in our mind, it can be transmuted into a positive by the simple procedure of changing ourselves; just change the tone.

Dad always said that if someone comes to talk to you in a negative or unhelpful manner, just find a positive and move forward. Bob Proctor wrote quite nicely about this as well. To paraphrase, he said that when someone starts complaining about something or being negative, just listen and, at the right moment, say something positive. It should not be flattering. Just complement the individual on what they are wearing if you genuinely like it, then you switch quickly into a positive position and human beings change direction quickly too.

‘Hearing is about taking on your conscious mind and,’ Dad said, ‘let negativity go in one ear and out of the other. That is why you have got two ears.’ Let all the negativity come in and go out without being processed. If it is positive, quickly bring it down into your emotions and subconscious mind.

‘The only way to genius, son, is through voluntary self-effort,’ Dad told me many times. That is inside-out education. That sums up what he was teaching. A man or woman can attain great heights solely through the driving force of his emotions.

No man or woman is happy or complete without these stimuli, but they do not always recognise this important truth. Having that emotional support and passion is summed up in an old saying: ‘A man’s wife may either make him or break him.’ Indeed, the same is also true in reverse. But the reason is not always understood. To make

him or break him is a result of an understanding of these forces, or lack of understanding of the notions of human stimuli.

To conclude, it is always said that behind every successful man or woman is a great partner, to provide that support and stimuli. This is so important and has a huge impact on human success, achievement and satisfaction. The true test in life is whether you could count on your partner to support you if you needed to start again. If yes, then you can consider yourself victorious.

## CHAPTER 14

### MIND

**D**ad never talked specifically about the mind, but many of the things he did talk about are relevant to this chapter. My mum, on the other hand, talked a great deal about the mind, being perhaps able to do that because she came from a medical background.

Having conducted my own studies about the mind, I can now relate. The key is to understand the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the body, as illustrated in the diagram drawn by Dr Thurman Fleet, which I explored a great deal in my previous book, *Thinking into Character*.

The subconscious mind consists of a field of consciousness in which every impulsive thought that reaches the mind through the five senses will, if it is emotionalised, turn into practical results. The subconscious mind receives and files impressions or thoughts, regardless of their nature. We may plant any planned thought or purpose in our subconscious mind and then that turns into results.

The subconscious mind works day and night through a method unknown to the human: Dad said that there is something out there that we do not know. He said there are so many answers we cannot see. Obviously, gravity is a good example – you cannot see it, but we know it is there. Dad told me just to accept there is something, an intelligence, which has power. That is the law of nature.

You cannot entirely control your mind, but you can voluntarily hand it any plans, desires, or purpose that you want to transform into reality. A man or woman is effectively a combination of their thoughts, feelings and actions to this point. Going forward, who they are will be purely based on their thoughts, feelings and actions from now on.

Dad said there is plenty of evidence to support the belief that the subconscious mind is the connecting link between our conscious mind and intelligence, or the laws of nature. Others have written about these ideas and Hill wrote a chapter on *The Subconscious Mind* in which he described it as, ‘The intermediary through which one can draw upon the forces of intelligence. It alone contains the secret process by which mental impulses are modified and changed into tangible results.’ This is an incredibly difficult concept to understand as it is intangible, but the possibilities of creative effort connected with the subconscious mind are huge.

When looking at these things, you achieve a deeper understanding only after you have accepted as a reality the existence of the subconscious mind. If you understand its possibilities as a medium of transmuting our desires into physical results, then you will comprehend the full significance of the instructions, and what the laws of nature give to humans.

I believe this understanding is critical. Understanding comes through study; it is not just a question of knowing facts. It is more what my dad did, or Clay Christensen, or Bob Proctor. Those thinkers managed to bring their ideas into their subconscious mind. How? Through constant repetition, but with emotion rather than just empty words.

It is important for us to understand these things and never become discouraged if we cannot do this on the first attempt. Some readers will not immediately get it, and I still do not get it all. But I am still studying and trying to see something different. Remember that the subconscious mind can be voluntarily directed only through habits. Habits, paradigms, cultural norms, these are all ways in which our minds are programmed. 'We can influence our subconscious mind. We have the best instrument within us to achieve success,' Dad always said.

What is the difference between us and our pets? They also have five senses, they can also do various things, but there are some intellectual factors that creation has plainly only given to the human being. Dogs, monkeys and cats have not created anything, but humans have. Creation is certainly linked to the human mind – there is so much evidence to prove this.

Naturally, this suggests to us that thoughts of fear or poverty are negative thoughts that we need to keep away. We need to work with positive thoughts. The subconscious mind will not want to remain idle; this is the problem. If you fail to plant desires in your subconscious mind, it will feed upon the thoughts that reach it as the result of neglect. You cannot neglect it; you must plant good thoughts and ideas.



Thought impulses are key and then it is about how you transmute those thoughts into results. Remember that we are living in the midst of all manner of thought impulses that reach our conscious mind, but we have a choice about what we allow to go to our subconscious. When we understand this, we hold the key that unlocks the door to the subconscious. Then we know exactly what to do.

The ideal is that we achieve control of that door so completely that no undesirable thought can influence our subconscious mind. We must just reject negative thoughts. Look at the news – it never starts out saying it is negative news, but that is what it turns out to be. We need to stop listening. The 24-hour news that just keeps on saying negative things, that is going into your subconscious mind and filling it with negative thoughts. Think about it, if the world starts to say there is a recession, it happens, because we all think like that. ‘We are planting these seeds and they become reality. You create your own economy,’ Dad said.

Everything that the human creates begins in the form of thought. Humans can create nothing that they do not first conceive in thought. If you can have it in your mind, you can have it in your hand.

With the aid of imagination, through thinking about things and then taking action, we can achieve success. All thought impulses intended for transmutation into the physical results are voluntarily planted in the subconscious mind, passed through the imagination and mixed with faith. The mixing of faith with the clear plan or purpose intended for submission to the subconscious mind can be done only through the imagination. Imagination is so important.

These emotions can be linked to our paradigms and how we are programmed, and therefore it is particularly important that we need to change our paradigms. The subconscious mind is more receptive to influence by impulses or thoughts mixed with feelings or emotions. If the feelings or emotions are just empty words, nothing is going to happen. There is much evidence to support the theory that only emotionalised thoughts have any action influence on the subconscious mind. If you do not give emotion, if it does not become subconscious, you are not going to take action, it's as simple as that. Emotions rule the majority of people.

Dad talked about various major positive and major negative emotions, so I think it is worth me talking about those. He said that negative emotions voluntarily inject themselves into the thought impulse, so it is always the negatives that go into the thought impulse, ensuring passage into the subconscious mind. The positives must be injected through the principles of imagination and the inside-out education that we are talking about. These are the thought impulses that an individual wishes to pass on to their subconscious mind.

So even when we talked about the negativity of the news, the negativity of the various sources of information that we get, the negative emotions voluntarily inject themselves. But it is the positive emotions where you need commitment. Dad said bad habits come in without you thinking, but to get good habits you have to make a conscious act.

Our emotions are linked to our DNA and the environment we have grown up in. This explains why thought impulses that have been well mixed with emotions are acted upon more readily than thought

impulses originating in other ways. It is important to note that applying emotion is critical.

Desires are positive emotions: one of the Ds that we talked about at the very beginning of this book. Faith is another positive emotion that we talked about – the ability to see the invisible, believe in the incredible and receive what the masses think is impossible. I am not talking about religious faith here, but the faith in what we can see and emotionalise. Love, enthusiasm, romance and belief – all of these are positive emotions. But you have to induce them. Some are natural, but you have to really inject them. There are other positive emotions, but these are the most powerful and the ones most commonly used in creative effort.

Dad believed if you master these emotions, other positive emotions will be at your command. Remember, you are looking at this for creation of success, results, ambitions and so on, so it is particularly important to put it into context. Clearly you can also use this approach for other things in life.

Let us quickly look at some negatives, which Hill was the first to identify. Every reader will understand these straight away, just as when Dad talked about these I understood easily. The emotions of fear, of jealousy, of hatred, of revenge, of greed, of anger, and, last but not least, the emotion of superstition. Dad said that superstition is the worst enemy you can have – please do not have superstition.

We have an apartment in The Emperor Apartment Building in Galle Road, Colombo, which is a wonderful 35-storey building right next to the Presidential palace, The Temple Trees. Our apartment

is on Floor 24 and going up in the lift, I said, 'Where is Floor 13?' It is gone, it is now called 12a. So, you go to 12, then 12a, and then 14, because of a fear of including Floor 13. Who they are kidding? It is still the 13th floor. The manager told me they just cannot sell or rent on the 13th floor. That clearly shows the consequence of superstition: even right at the heart of that city, people have the concept of fear.

I am not saying superstition is right or wrong if someone believes in it, but I am just saying that it is superstition. I am putting forward this concept and people can think about it.

Positive and negative emotions occupy our minds all the time, like light and darkness. You cannot get rid of darkness unless you put the light on. You are either in darkness or light, negative or positive. If you are going between both, you are confused. You need to make the decision, make the command and then follow it.

'Either positive or negative must dominate, that is the reality. It is your responsibility,' Dad said, 'to make sure that positive emotions dominate and influence your mind.' Here is the law of habit coming to your aid. Here is the law of paradigms. It is not always you that has introduced fear or superstition, it is often because you are following others. If you think about it, it has been said that the opposite of courage is not cowardice, it is conformity. Do what you think.

The laws of habits, paradigms, cumulative culture make it so difficult to make these changes. But by applying and using positive emotions, eventually they will dominate your mind so completely that the negatives cannot enter. Dad always told me that I needed to

be absolutely on top of the game and it's true – as soon as you lose concentration, fear will come in.

Right now, as I am writing this chapter, we are in the ninth week of the Covid-19 pandemic. Since 22 March 2020, every morning when I get up I have a new problem to solve. Some problems are massive, some problems small, some I can come up with solutions for quickly. We are witnessing the problem-solution continuum, where a solution created a few hours ago subsequently becomes a problem. How do you deal with that? When you get into that space, fear kicks in. But the opposite of fear is faith and when we feel fear it is important we remember that. In fact, 22 March is Tharshiny's birthday and since that day I have had a massive paradigm shift on my personal and professional life.

Following these kinds of ideas literally and continuously allows us to gain control of our own subconscious mind. The presence of a single negative in our conscious mind is sufficient to destroy all the positives in our subconscious mind. Dad gave a brilliant example. He told me to picture a cup of milk that is wonderful, nourishing, and so useful for your growth. Then imagine you put a drop of poison into it, just a drop. Then, when you drink that milk, it is absolutely not going to be healthy or nourishing, it is going to destroy you. That is the best way to explain this concept of the presence of a single negative in your conscious mind being sufficient to destroy all chances of constructive thought in your subconscious mind.

This is why 99.9% of the population is struggling. They want to achieve certain things, but they are not able. Ten years after I lost Dad, in 2016, I met Clay Christensen at Harvard Business School, and that

is the day that I really felt there was something else to understand. It was like a light came on, allowing me to come out of a dark tunnel and see clearly. I was fortunate to spend time with Clay and have private conversations that have been incredibly valuable. Every word he says has a huge amount of meaning.

If you are observing such ideas, you will notice that most people resort to something called praying after everything else has failed. They may pray by a ritual of repetition, repeating something a hundred times a week. It is a fact that most people resort to this only after everything else has failed, with their mind filled with fear and doubt. Those are the emotions that the subconscious mind acts upon, which are passed on to nature or the intelligence that we are talking about.

Dad said if you resort to these rituals but are afraid as you perform them, you may not receive what you want and your ritual may not be acted upon by the intangible power we are able to access. The rituals that you perform sometimes result in the realisation of the fact, leaving you unfulfilled. If you have ever had the experience of receiving that for which you performed a ritual, think about this. Go back into your memory and recall your state of mind. Let us say you achieved something, a car, a career, a partner, or a particular success that you were working towards. What was your state of mind when you followed that ritual? You will know for sure when you do this reflection that the theory we are talking about is absolutely correct. If you go there filled with fear, forget it.

Dad always believed the time would come when educational institutions would see this and act upon it. If you look at the whole

educational system, including religious education, it is still hovering on the subconscious mind and not necessarily explaining it. This is what inside-out education means. Moreover, these ideas are what mankind is already doing, all we need is to understand it.

Once it is understood that if the mind is in a state of fear it can be overcome, there will be no such emotion of fear, because it is only there from years of being programmed. Ignorance, superstition, false teaching – they can all disappear, and humans can attain the true status of infinite intelligence. This is my mission, to make the laws of nature understood and bring some of the things Dad talked about into everyday life.

When I sometimes questioned these ideas, Dad always told me that if believed they were far-fetched, to take a look back at the human race. Less than 200 years ago, we believed lightning to be evidence of God. Now, thanks to the power of faith, humans are harnessing lightning to maybe turn the wheels of industry. Much less than 200 years ago, man and woman believed the space between the planets to be nothing but a void. Now, thanks to the same power of imagination and human effort, we know that is not the case and there is space between planets that is very much alive.

All humans living in this new world of faith are absolutely able to achieve anything. Many years ago, we thought the world was flat. If anyone says that now they are ridiculed. Humans went up many miles above and saw it is a globe, not flat. Their understanding changed.

What reason have humans to believe that this same energy does not connect every human brain with infinite intelligence? We can

ask the same question, all the questions that human beings have ever known. But we must be open-minded. Dad said that many times, and so did Bob.

When you are reading this chapter, do not just accept or reject it. Consider it. Dad said, ‘What you see and hear, everything is false. But when you emotionalise thoughts and process ideas, truth comes through that internal inside-out education. It costs nothing except patience, faith, persistence and understanding, and understanding will only come through study.’

The more you study, the more your awareness will increase. You want to understand how nature works and you want to understand how creation works. Dad said some people say they love nature, trees and plants, but that is different to what we are talking about. When we talk about nature, it is not planting trees or gardening, though those are great hobbies to have. We are talking about understanding nature’s laws so that we can go and create our own economy.

The method by which we communicate with intelligence through nature is similar to that through which the vibration of sound is communicated by radio. Think about that. Radio and satellite signals work without wires. If you understand the working principle of radio or satellite, you know that sound cannot be communicated through the ether until it has been set up. It has a frequency.

Think about the telephone – Bob would say that all the time – you call somebody in Australia from London, they just answer, because they are on the frequency. In the old days, there were only limited frequencies and lines were engaged or unable to connect. Now it has



stepped up. Human beings can do that too, change onto a rate of vibration that human senses can detect. The radio station picks up the sound of a human voice then takes it to the other side of the world. Only in this way can the vibration of sound be communicated through the ether.

After this transformation has taken place, everything picks up, you see things differently and you are on a different plain. The subconscious mind is the intermediary that translates our desires into results; that has been proven scientifically, biologically and with philosophy. So, please take these ideas and understand them. These are remarkably interesting areas. I am relaying what I have learned from Dad and my subsequent studies of these concepts. These are absolute gems – once you master these things, creating your own economy becomes a piece of cake.

## CHAPTER 15

### WISDOM

When Dad talked about wisdom, he always talked about it as the sixth sense. He said the sixth sense is intangible, infinite, and you cannot see it because it has no form. How then do you believe in it and develop it? This is what he talked about. This principle of the sixth sense can only be understood once we understand the laws of nature. Dad said you cannot do your Masters before you do your A-levels, but the sixth sense occupies an important place in our studies of the laws of nature.

The sixth sense is that portion of the subconscious mind that has been referred to in different forms – creative imagination, intangible and so on. I have done a lot of research on this now and can relate that to what Dad said. He said, ‘We are a radio station, son. We receive and we broadcast. The receiving comes through our imagination, where we have ideas, plans and thoughts that flash into the mind.’ These

flashes are sometimes called a hunch or an inspiration, even an ‘aha moment’. Great inventors have those ideas and make things happen.

The sixth sense defies description. You really cannot define it and it cannot be described to a person who has not fully understood these ideas. You can develop it through development of will, but it is a lifelong journey. Dad told me many times that what I studied at school and what I went on to study at university were just preliminary, and that I would learn throughout my life.

The sixth sense is the medium of contact between the intangible and us. This is where the mind and the non-form come together. It is believed to be the point at which the mind of the human contacts the intangible, so it is very important. Through the aid of this sixth sense, Dad said that people are able to spot opportunities, but also dangers and walk away from them. This is controversial so many of you may not agree. I am not sure how I feel about this idea, but I am relaying what my father told me.

This theory leads me to ask why he did not spot his danger on 23 July 2006, so it is controversial for me. This book is *The Power of Learning from DAD*; I’m not necessarily saying that I agree entirely with all of it. Some of it I am not yet able to see at his level of awareness. I still do not know why that day happened, but I can now comprehend that there are times when your sixth sense stops you doing things. Sometimes it tells you not to, it comes to your aid. If you can develop your sixth sense, this is wisdom, where humans reach a different level. The only reflection I have about 23 July is that I was supposed to go with my dad and decided at the last minute not

to. Perhaps if I had gone with him as planned I could have saved him. Perhaps I would not have been able, and I'd have seen that traumatic incident unfold.

Dad did not believe in miracles. When I was a child of 10 or 11, I was playing in one of the grounds and overheard music. It was nice music, a beating drum and singing, so I went to explore with my friend's cousin, Pratheepan, and found a group of people worshipping a human being. I was attracted to that movement for quite a while, and Dad actually kind of followed me in that. We went to India a couple of times to see this particular person.

Dad was always quiet and thoughtful: he told me he would back me in what I was doing, but the truth is that this is not the truth. I am not here to talk about my experience, but all I would say is that he never understood or accepted miracles. But what we did understand was that nature never deviates from her established laws. Some of her laws are so incomprehensible that they produce what appear to be miracles for a person who is ignorant.

The sixth sense comes close to that and is where perhaps we have used the word miracle. This will be interesting for readers who have gone through different experiences with their own parents. We follow people not fully understanding why and then we stop and think – there are people in some parts of the world that want others to follow, but effectively they are taking advantage of the lack of understanding of those followers. We have all come across personalities like these in our lives. Do not just follow, stand and ask questions; by doing that, wisdom will come.

So, infinite intelligence converts acorns into oak trees, makes water flow downhill. The law of gravity is an intangible. When I was searching for understanding, Dad told me to look at great leaders and see if I wanted to do something similar to what they were doing. I read a lot of history and autobiographies that are fascinating. I have read Boris Johnson's book, *The Churchill Factor*, and it is remarkably interesting. I was fortunate enough to have my copy signed by Boris, well before he became Prime Minister. I can tell you that if you read that book, and one can relate to the power of imagination and persistence, it's my personal view that there are facts in it that he was writing about and the more you think about something, the more you become it. It is a very powerful book and regardless of your political allegiances, I would recommend it.

My experience has taught me the basic concept of all this, which is that you become what you think about. The dominating thoughts and desires will get you where you want to be. 'Every deeply-seated desire has the effect of causing one to seek outward expression,' Dad said. That has been scientifically proven, how desire can be transmuted to character, to results, and to material success.

Dad said you need to understand your mind and the brain. I am not going to get into specifics because it is extraordinarily complex, but I understand this all fairly well now. We are currently creating Regent Hill University, which has two cornerstones. One is the Carnegie Foundation and the other is Napoleon Hill. Hill was asked by Carnegie to research these issues and that is why we are calling it Regent Hill University, to respect the teacher.

Let me expand this radio broadcasting principle. Through the medium of nature, in a fashion similar to that employed by the radio broadcast, every human brain is capable of picking up vibrations of thoughts being released by other brains. This is the radio broadcasting theory. This whole creative imagination is something we need to fully understand. Creative imagination is effectively the receiving centre of the brain, which receives communication between one's conscious, educated, reasoning mind and nature. When stimulated or stepped up to a higher rate of vibration, the mind becomes more receptive to the vibration of thoughts that reach it through nature. This stepping up process takes place through positive emotion. That is where positive mental attitude comes in, and the growth mindset. Everything is inter-related but positive emotions have an impact, as do negative emotions that we do not want to dwell on.

Vibrations of an exceedingly high rate are the only vibrations picked up and carried by nature from the brain. Thought is energy. 'Thought is everything and is intangible – nobody knows what we are thinking,' Dad said, 'you can think what you want. Thought is energy, travelling at an exceedingly high rate of vibration,' he said. Thought that has been modified or stepped up by any of the major emotions vibrates at a much higher rate than the ordinary thought, and it is this type of thought that passes from one brain to another. Not the normal thought, but this elevated idea. He used to tell me, 'Just step it up and it will happen.' A number of emotions drive this as stimuli, and you can refer back to the stimuli chapter on this.

The brain that has been stimulated by these emotions vibrates at a much more rapid rate than it does when emotions are not active. You

mix your feelings and emotions with your thoughts and pass it all into your subconscious mind.

The subconscious mind is the sending station, the receiving station is the creative imagination. Along with the important factors of the subconscious mind and the faculty of the creative imagination, we create our mental broadcasting, our own radio station.

If you bring desire into it, the whole thing steps up. The introduction of mental broadcasting is a comparatively simple procedure. You have three elements – your sending and receiving, and your ability to push these ideas over and over again through desire and faith to make it happen.

Dad believed that if people live in their senses, they will not achieve anything. Once, when we were sharing a drink in London, he told me that if I was going to live with just my five senses, I would be ‘a complete loser’. I am not sure he meant it like that, perhaps it was the Scotch talking. Nevertheless, he had a point. What you see, smell, hear, taste and touch with your senses is not enough to achieve in life. Every animal has those senses – you need to provoke your thinking.

Dad always talked about the Great Depression, a time he said opportunities came. Now I can relate that to the time of Covid-19. The Depression brought the world an understanding of the forces that are intangible and unseen. Likewise, I am writing this book through exceedingly difficult times, which unlike the Great Depression have had not just an economic impact but have taken a huge human and social toll. So many people have died, often alone. We will recover, but we need to understand these laws.

A few years ago, the Microsoft founder Bill Gates talked about the threat of a virus to humanity, highlighting the huge amounts being spent to withstand nuclear attack when in fact the threat was different. He said there is no point in predicting, but as a country and worldwide we need to be prepared for change, for action and reaction.

Through the ages that have passed, humans have depended too much on their physical senses and have limited their knowledge to physical things they can see, smell, hear, taste and touch. Now we are entering the most marvellous of all ages, an age that will teach us something of the intellectual forces. We really want to bounce back and rebuild after Covid-19 and perhaps we will learn as we pass through this phase that the other self is more powerful than the physical self. We must learn from history. 'Who is this other self?' Dad used to ask me. He told me to look in the mirror.

I can remember him telling me this one day when he was stood in front of the mirror. I used to stand and watch him shave, because I really liked the way he spent time on it. I remember then starting to shave early myself because I wanted to be like him.

Dad said when we look in the mirror, we see both our physical selves and that intangible. Sometimes, humans think lightly of the intangible, the things that they cannot perceive through any of their five senses. But we must remember we are all controlled by forces that we cannot see, that are intangible. That other self is perhaps more powerful than the physical self.

The whole of mankind has not the power to cope with, nor to control, the intangible forces wrapped up in the rolling waves of the



oceans. We could not stop Covid-19. Man has not the capacity to understand the intangible forces, such as gravity for example. Dad always said that man has no understanding of gravity – we must just accept it is what keeps this little earth suspended in mid-air and keeps man from falling. I still remember Dad giving me a globe and teaching me about gravity as a child. Even now I do not understand it; I accept it, but I do not understand it.

Humans are entirely subservient to the intangible forces that come with a thunderstorm. We are just as helpless in the presence of an intangible force like electricity. Dad would say these are intangibles and you must accept them. If you cannot, you are not going to create anything in this world.

Nor is this by any means the end of human's ignorance in connection with things unseen and intangible. Humans do not understand intangible forces or this intelligence, one might call it, wrapped up in the soil of the earth. This is the force that provides humans with everything they need.

Dad said ignorance simply means you ignore, so you do not learn. But you can learn through study. I am not talking about studying for an exam, I am talking about understanding.

To be honest, when Dad said these things, I did not always take them seriously. But when I lost him in 2006, I started to reflect. Then, when I was in Harvard Business School, I remember the afternoon when Professor Clay Christensen gave a lecture on his latest research about how you measure your life. I asked various questions and he came to me afterwards and asked me to see him. I worried about what

might be wrong, this great guru of Harvard Business School inviting me in. I still vividly remember telling my wife Tharshiny that I was going to meet Clay, who is really highly respected, and everybody wants to talk to.

I met with him and we had a conversation for probably a couple of hours. The essence of that discussion was that you really need to understand the laws of nature. ‘The world is following and learning all the man-made laws, particularly at Harvard,’ Clay said. But he was interested in laws of nature. He said he could see that I was hungry for something, so I should perhaps go and do the research. He gave me the book and said if I needed any help, to go to him. I had a fantastic relationship with him, sadly he passed away in early 2020. I was due to go to his memorial just before the lockdown and unfortunately could not go due to the travel restrictions imposed as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

I am sure Clay’s legacy will carry on and my dad’s legacy will carry on; I am going to take those, as well as the legacy of Bob Proctor, who is a living legend, and work with them. Bob took it to a different level: Clay asked the question and was still teaching all the Harvard models, the hardware element of an organisation. The person who got me to understand the software element was Bob, who is a great teacher and I have led my life differently as a result. For that I am hugely grateful.

Coming back to the concept of wisdom, you can look at culture and education, but the greatest of all intangibles is thought. Can you see a thought? Can you hear a thought? Can you touch a thought? No. So when we talk intangibles, thoughts are the starting point, the seeds.

Dad said that an idle man's brain is a devil's workshop. It has a negative connotation but nevertheless, if you want something to happen in your mind, do not be idle, plant good thoughts, have a positive mental attitude, a growth mindset, and have faith. Then you will find your answer.

He also said not to worry until the worry worries you. I understand that now, but why do we all continue to worry so much? Because of our environment? Because everyone else is doing it? Because of what we are hearing and seeing? It is a vicious circle. During Covid-19 I have learned not to listen to the news, which only takes me to more and more negativity. I am sure the world will recover, and these kinds of teaching are absolutely right.

Dad said men of science have begun to turn their attention to the study of this intangible and how it is linked to the brain and the mind. He said we are still in the kindergarten stage. I do not know if that is true, I have not done enough research. But his view was that we are just starting and there is a huge amount of learning to be done, around subjects such as artificial intelligence.

There are millions of brain cells and nerve cells in the human cerebral cortex. Understanding that is a minefield, and a huge area that we as human beings are only just beginning to work on.

I want to finish with some ideas on the procedure of working through sixth senses, mind management and broadcasting. Dad talked about thoughts and told me to ignore the sensory factors. 'The procedure is simple,' he said, 'sit down and bring ideas into your mind.'

Something that Carnegie mentioned that is quite timely to Covid-19 is the need to embrace a positive mental attitude. He said the Depression was a blessing in disguise because it reduced the whole world to a new starting point and gave everyone a new opportunity. Covid-19 is not the same because of the extent of human loss and suffering, but the shock and change that will result as we all emerge from lockdown will similarly reduce the whole world to a new starting point. That gives everyone a new opportunity, like starting a clean sheet of paper.

My dad was such a humble man, he always lived his life, not through his senses but through using his intellectual factors. He personified wisdom, and I pay so much tribute to him; it is an honour for me to be able to write this chapter.

## CHAPTER 16

### IMPRESSION

The impression that Dad talked about is the impression we have of ourselves, which is the self-image, and also the impression that we give other people when we are in their environment. Dad always said that if you are in someone else's environment, they should feel happy you are there.

He also said you can get into any business you want by making constructive use of what you actually have. The grass is always greener on the other side, but you can always do well with what you have now, by making constructive use of the business you are in and by doing your daily work in a certain way. He said you don't need to run around; you should look for opportunities but remember to concentrate on what you have.

So, in that context, let us talk about the ideas of impression that he shared with me. All men and women are seeking increase, this is the

law of nature. The spirit, or nature, is always seeking fuller expression. The desire for increase is inherent in all nature, it is the fundamental impulse of the universe. All human activities are based on the desire for increase. People are always seeking more food, better clothes, better shelter, more luxury, more cars or more properties. The list goes on.

Every living thing is under this necessity of continuous advancement and, where the increase of life ceases, dissolution and death go in its place. Wallace D Wattles wrote about many of these ideas in his book *The Science of Getting Rich*, and I am drawing on many of them in this chapter. Dad always told me not confuse greed with increase. Increase is wanting more of something to advance your life and Dad said when we are looking for this increase, we should make sure we respect the laws and do not violate somebody else's space or achievements. So, humans instinctively know this and therefore, they are always seeking more. The normal desire for increase, whether it is success or wealth, is not an evil thing. Dad was called Selvam, which means wealth, so every time someone called his name, they were calling him wealthy. He attracted that, he used to say jokingly. There is nothing wrong with attracting wealth, but the question is what you do with it. Wealth is a stream – it comes, you enjoy it, and it goes. Do not let it stagnate; like water when wealth stagnates its smells bad.

The desire for a more abundant life is simple. It is aspiration and because it is the deepest instinct of our nature, humans are attracted to those that can give them more of the means of life. We are creative centres from which increases can come. Every business, whether it offers products or services, relies on dealing with other people, either personally or in any shape or form. 'So,' Dad said, 'just give. Convey

assurance of increase to every human that you come into contact with, no matter how small the transaction may be.’

We used to have shops and trading businesses selling goods in the eastern part of Sri Lanka. I remember Dad talking to one of the guys about selling lollipops to small children. He was saying that even in that quite simple business transaction, the child wants to buy and get the impression of increase, so it was really about serving that customer with care and duty. ‘Make sure the customer is impressed,’ he said. ‘Make sure you engage and give that impression of increase. Convey the impression of advancement with everything you do,’ Wattles wrote, ‘so that all people receive the impression that you are an advancing personality and that you advance all who deal with you. When they are in your company, they need to feel that they feel something.’

Dad said you should only think of business and personal relationships, do not try to sell something, and do not become obsessed with what you sell to people. Just make sure that your non-form expresses who you are and you provide a valuable service. He said you can convey this impression by holding the unshakeable faith that we as humans are in the way of increase and by letting this faith and desire permeate every action. He said do everything you do with the conviction that you are an unlimited reservoir of energy and personality and that you are giving advancement to everybody by your giving.

He also told me never to boast or brag about success or talk unnecessarily about achievements. ‘True faith is never boastful,’ he said, as I mentioned in a previous chapter. People who have real

substance do not feel the need to talk too much; the people who boast are the people that lack substance. They are struggling to achieve alignment within themselves. Whenever you find a boastful person you find one who is doubtful and afraid, he said. Simply feel the faith and let it work out in every transaction.

Let every act, look and tone express the quiet assurance that you are achieving what you are achieving. Look at the way you express your stature, your humbleness, your humility. Dad used to say that words should not be necessary to communicate this feeling to others because they will feel that sense when in your company. You do not need to say anything – your talk, your walk, your posture, your tone of voice and your handshake will all give you presence.

‘We must impress others so they will feel that in associating with us they will make themselves feel good,’ Wattles said. That is a true leader. A true leader is not someone who shouts and orders, ‘Follow me’. A true leader makes other people feel they are the best. Dad said whether in business, school, in your community or in politics, you will be surprised by the unexpected benefits that will come to you from this approach. But you must be honest, you cannot flatter with empty words for the sake of attracting people. That is shallow and the law will not deliver what you are seeking.

Dad said nothing is so appealing to the uninformed as the exercise of dominance by others. Dad always compared Mahatma Gandhi with other so-called leaders who wanted to take independence. ‘Where are they now,’ he said. ‘Eventually, they do not succeed, or if they do, it is a continuous struggle. These are the laws of nature.’



‘The desire to rule for selfish gratification has been the curse of the world,’ Wattles wrote, and we need to spot that in good time. If I go back and look at the history of various countries in Asia and Africa, different groups have decided they want to give freedom to their people, race, or tribe. But when you dig down, is the desire to rule for selfish gratification because they themselves had problems – with their environment or suppression, when they were growing up?

For countless ages, if you look at rulers who have done this, often countries are still suffering. Those that seek not to get more for all but more power for themselves, they do not succeed. They may talk like Mahatma Gandhi, but they are clearly not like Mahatma Gandhi. When you look through history at various dictators or so-called leaders, many were actually working for their own benefit rather than to seek more life for all.

Business, industry and politics are driven by these ideas today and we must be able to change our mindset. The mind that seeks mastery over others is a competitive mind. Dad always said, ‘Please do not compete with others, only compete with yourself. The competitive mind is not creative and never will be.’

To master the environment and your destiny, it is not at all necessary that you should rule over your fellow human being. Indeed, when you fall into that category, your life becomes a misery. Beware of the competitive mind – no better statement of the principle of creative action can be formulated than the favourable affirmation; the golden rule is always, what I want for myself I will want for everybody. This comes from Wattles, and Dad always believed we should not have one rule for ourselves and another for everybody else.

This is where inside-out education comes in because we are learning these materials and believing in our conscious mind. If we want to become a leader, the only way to do it is through the subconscious mind, and that comes through repetition, study and greater understanding.

Dad talked to me a lot about business and I started my business with him in 2000, so he worked with us for six years and was with us as our growth increased in multiples. And I hold with his belief that the person who is engaged in providing a service or other form of business, no matter whether they are a professional, a politician, a business owner, community leader, tribe leader or wage earner; if they can give an increase of life to others and make them sense that fact, they will be attractive to those people, who will in turn also succeed.

Mum comes from a medical background and I have heard conversations that say the doctor who holds the vision of himself as the great and successful medical professional and who works towards the complete realisation of that vision with faith and purpose, succeeds enormously well against the doctor who is just looking to charge fees. This advancing human, who holds a clear mental image of him or herself as successful, and who obeys natural laws, will provide that service in that context.

Dad believed that everyone should have a mentor. He was a Hindu and Mum was a Christian, so I have seen and understand both religions. Science and theology are the laws of nature, like cause and effect, and you need to understand both. He said that when someone is telling you how, but is not also showing you how, this is knowing, but not doing. We need someone who is willing to share something;

someone who is successful, healthy and beloved of himself. He also said if you are moving into education in the final stages of your career, you cannot just preach, you must practise. This is where the whole concept of ‘The end result of education is character’ came about.

The same is true of the teacher who can inspire children with faith and purpose of advancing life – he will never be out of a job. Some teachers are fantastic. They will constantly attract, because they aim to give, not to trade. Dad said there is a difference between giving and trading. Giving is providing a service without thinking about what you are going to get in return. Trading is when even before you provide your service you think about what you are going to get. That does not mean you are doing it for nothing, but don’t think all the time about what you are going to get. Just provide the service, because that is the cause, and nature will give you the effect.

Sometimes the effect may come from another source, and that’s okay. Dad used to say, ‘please just smile, son, mahan, just provide valuable service and you will always forever be wealthy, you will always be successful, you will always be Selva’, which means wealth.

Any teacher who has this faith and purpose can give it to their student. They cannot help passing it on if it is part of their own life and practice. If you want to be a successful professional, you must understand these concepts. What is true of the teacher, medical professional, lawyer, dentist, or accountant, is that if you want to become successful, you must understand the concept of impression. When people are in your company, they should feel good. This isn’t about flattery, but true good. If you flatter, you will not succeed. ‘You might think you are succeeding, but you will not be fulfilled,’ Dad said.

‘Combined mental and personal action takes you to wherever you want to go. This whole concept of increase in life is,’ Dad said, ‘mathematically proven, like one plus one is two. Putting the power of success and the purpose to become successful into everything that we do is so important.’

And Wattles said that the person who is merely a good worker, filling his place to the best of his ability, and satisfied with that, is valuable to any employer and it is not in the employer’s interest to promote him, because he is worth more where he is. So, when you are providing a service as an employee or a business partner, do your best, for that increase will take you up the ladder. To secure advancement, something more is necessary and that is to be too large for your place. The person who is certain to advance is the one who is too big for his place, who has a clear concept of where he wants to be, a goal, a vision, a desire.

‘Do not try to more than fill your present place,’ Dad said. He was saying that the growth should be gradual but exponential growth is also possible – that is remarkably interesting. Think beyond what common sense would allow. Get uncomfortable and seek failure. People sometimes change jobs and get a job they know they are not ready for – they give empty words in an interview and increase their salary. I have made that mistake and I am sure a lot of us have, or we have recruited those people. Do not try to more than fill your present place with a view to pleasing yourself or your employer. Do it with the idea of advancing yourself. ‘Hold the faith,’ Dad said, ‘have purpose and you will achieve.’

Another aspect of this debate has been argued by Price Pritchett in a book called *You2*.

Dad also said that if you are able to programme yourself in this way – because unfortunately we are already programmed in different ways through our childhood and our environment – then every person that comes in contact with you will feel the power of purpose radiating from you. The key word here is radiating or broadcasting from you. Everyone will get the sense of advancement and increase and be attracted to you like a magnet. If there is no possibility for advancement in your present job, you will very soon see an opportunity to take another job.

He believed it was vital to always give your best, give your everything, and if you are growing more than the job can give you, another opportunity will open. There is a power that never fails to present opportunity to this kind of advancing personality that is knowing and obedient of laws of nature. Nature cannot help helping you if you act in this way. And he used to say that if you cannot achieve success, go back and figure out why. If thousands of employees work this way, this is how large, successful organisations are created.

To finish on this idea of impression, when the chance to be more than you are comes your way and you feel impelled to take it; that is the first step towards a greater opportunity.

So, it is important to understand this idea of impression, which is in our thinking. It comes back to this basic idea of how we become what we think; thoughts become things. ‘If you see it in your mind

you will hold it in your hand,' Bob Proctor has told us. So, in terms of impression, you attract things because you plant those seeds in other minds. But you have to be ready to receive too – that is especially important, Dad used to tell me. When we set up these ideas we attract opportunity, and when that comes, we must be ready to receive it.

People talk about luck and being in the right place at the right time. Dad said in reality it is nothing like that. He explained that the laws will get you where you want to be, but think about other people in your company, organisation or political party, who take a position and do not last. Why do others stay around for longer and succeed? 'That is where character comes in,' Dad said, 'and it is nothing to do with knowing facts.' This is understanding inside-out education. This is understanding how the laws of nature work. This is the measure of true success and by studying these ideas, success will come.

'What is important,' Dad said, 'is that success means successful living; a long period of peace, joy and happiness.' We define success as the progressive realisation of a worthy goal, so you set a goal and you take action, so you become successful. The real things in life – such as peace, harmony, integrity, security and happiness – are intangible. Nature is intangible, gravity is intangible. But if we don't understand the concept of intangibles and if we work with a concept of tangibles alone, clearly we are not going to fully understand how the creative forces work. We will not be able to drive cars if we do not learn how to drive them and the same applies here. We have to get this from the deep self, the inner intellect, our emotional intelligence, and by building up these ideas we can create the lives of our choosing.

When Dad said you can create your own life, back when we were in Sri Lanka, I could not understand how I could achieve that. The country was in a state of war and bombs were going off all the time. He kept asking me what I wanted to do. I said I wanted to go to England, and he told me to keep thinking about it and then I would get there. He was absolutely right.

In 1990, I was so fortunate to come to this wonderful country, and I am launching this book on my 50th birthday, 30 years on from that. I have had more of my life in this country than I spent in Sri Lanka, the country where I was born.

This chapter is about the concept of impression, and how, if you are in the right environment you can attract the right result. It is like the magnet, Dad said, which can only attract metal, it can never attract rubber, and when the rubber doesn't come your way, don't worry about it, because you are not meant to attract it.

Impression is what you give to those you meet, and what the readers of this book will receive from the author. 'You need to leave an impression that makes people feel good. Do not do anything in expectation,' Dad said. But that positive impression that you give, you should give to everyone – our actions should always make a fellow human being feel better.

## CHAPTER 17

### OPPORTUNITY

**D**ad used to say that opportunity is available to everybody, but the key is how we embrace and take action when it is presented to us. He said opportunities are always there – to be taken, not given. When an opportunity is taken, and as long as you work within the laws, you will achieve.

Dad also said we are never unsuccessful because opportunities are taken away from us or used by others. You may be disappointed not to be in a certain line of work, but there are other options open to you. When an opportunity comes, you need to take it and, as long as it fits your purpose and there is an alignment with your thoughts, feelings and actions, then take action.

But you cannot do everything. As Dad said, you need to focus. He never believed in putting all your eggs in one basket – he said it is a good idea to do lots of things and have multiple sources of



revenue. But he also said, if you put all your eggs in one basket, watch that basket.

Dad said that opportunity moves in different ways at different times. This is a fantastic time to write about this, because with Covid-19, the world has changed fundamentally during lockdown and so there are huge opportunities coming. The clock has been reset. What he said makes complete sense: There is an infinite amount of opportunity for humans who go with the tide instead of trying to swim against it.

Hard work is important but sometimes you also need diligence and wisdom. To illustrate this Dad told an interesting story about a fly on a windowsill trying to get outside. Unfortunately, this little fly did not have that wisdom and despite all its trying, ultimately it died on the windowsill. But if the fly had looked, it would have seen the door and been able to escape. If one opportunity is against you, look around and go with the flow.

I have heard the same story in a different context from Bob Proctor, about a fly trying to get through when it clearly sees something blocking its path. We can also think about persistence in this context, but the point is about having the wisdom to realise when another approach is needed. It is not about giving up or changing your goal, but simply looking for another way to achieve it.

Whether we are postal workers, professionals, or farmers, none of us is without opportunity. Humans are not kept down by their bosses or by the powers of big business and conglomerates, these are excuses. This is something that Wallace D Wattles wrote about, the idea that people are where they are because they think and act in a certain way.

‘When he begins to do things in a certain way, the working person who is in action can become the master,’ Wattles said. The master that does not work in a certain way will become the worker. The learned will be left behind, but the learners will succeed.

The law of success is the same law for everybody. We tend to think that certain workers will remain where they are if they continue to do the same job. But they are not thinking. The problem is everything is created through a thought process and they believe they cannot do anything else. ‘That worker, or that master, or that boss or subordinate, is held down only by ignorance and mental sluggishness,’ Dad used to say. That was an interesting choice of words. He also said that a person is mentally sluggish if they think an individual can just follow the tide of opportunity to riches or success. That is what *The Power of Learning from DAD* has really showed me. He completely believed, as I do now, that no one is kept in poverty because there are not enough riches. There is more than enough for everyone. Dad used to say – and Wattles said too – that a palace the size of the Taj Mahal could be built for every family in India, the land is there, the materials are there. Under intensive cultivation, this could be achieved because there is unlimited supply from nature. The visible supply is practically inexhaustible, while the invisible supply, through intangibles, really is inexhaustible.

So, when set your goal, you fall in love with that idea and you emotionalise it. By emotionalising that idea, your body takes action. You are not taking action, all you are doing is emotionalising that idea into your subconscious mind and then your body has got to take action, it has no choice. It will take action, unless you lose

focus on your goal, or unless you start thinking about other things. Think about that – if you really want to achieve something, your body will know.

It also applies to simple bad habits. For instance, I have been told from a young age that I am overweight. Perhaps that has gone into my psyche. I am trying to come out of that, but I can see that if I really wanted to take action over a period of time, I know I would release that weight. But as soon as I lose that focus, it starts all over again.

The whole world or universe is made of this infinite intangible. Dad said space has a lot more to offer and everything is hugely available, but with our ignorance, with our senses, we only see a limited amount of resources. Our senses are not allowing us to see these things. People are not successful because nature makes them fail; nature is an inexhaustible store house and we just need to take it in the right way. The supply will not run short.

When the supply of building materials is exhausted, more will be produced. When the soil is exhausted, oil will keep coming, food will keep coming. If human beings are still in such a stage of social development as to need that golden syrup, it will be produced, we just need to take action. Nature responds to the needs of the humans, Wattles said; it will not let them be without.

‘Nature wants to look after you, but you need to know how to get it,’ Dad said. Bill Gates, the co-founder of Microsoft, once said that if you are born poor, that is not your mistake, but if you die poor, your own actions are to blame. Then there is the myth that wealth is

a bad thing. Dad certainly did not believe this. He was called Selvam – wealth, and he had a rich life. He effectively gained continuously. He said being rich in what you do is most important.

People get confused about money, which Dad called the harvest of our production. The amount of money that we earn depends not just on who we are, but on the demand for what we do and our ability to do it individually and collectively, and the difficulty in replacing our piece of core competence. It's that simple. So, the amount of money you earn is on this flow and it will continuously come. If you are doing something that people want, and you are doing it to the best of your ability and every day you perfect yourself, then the flow will happen. And when the flow comes, you will keep providing your service, and provide good things to the world. That is where giving comes, rather than trading.

Dad said there is a difference between giving and trading – giving is where you just give without expectation; you provide your service to someone without any expectation. You guess a reward will come, but if you think about the reward first, then flow will get stagnated. Trading is when, before you even give something, you ask what is in it for me?

People, Dad said, are always about what is in it for them. That is a very wrong question. Nothing is just for yourself because you are only here for a temporary time, he said. What can I give to this world? And as I think Abraham Lincoln said, rather than asking what your country can give to you, you should ask what is it that you can give to your country. That is the best way to explain giving and trading.

Be a giver to the country. That is what Dad always told me. And when it comes to the United Kingdom, I will always give back to this wonderful nation that took me in as a refugee. I am now giving back to the nation, so is my wife Tharshiny, and our children. They are proud British citizens, who will help to take this country to the next level in the 21st century.

So, it is a natural for all of us to want more. That is nature, not greediness. Wanting more is the expansion of your spirit. But people sometimes get that confused with greed. Greed is snatching things from people. Growth is accessing and receiving from nature, and this is something Bob Proctor said quite nicely, you willingly give, and you graciously receive. Dad used to say in different words that you should willingly give, and sometimes giving needs to be spontaneous. And you graciously receive, something you cannot stop it; it will come. It goes back to action, reaction, cause and effect. You cannot stop because if you are giving, you will receive wealth and happiness.

The opposite is also true; when you do not give, nothing comes. If you are just static and you are not giving, you are not thinking, and you are not taking action; nothing will come.

‘It is the nature of intelligence to enlarge itself and the quality of consciousness to seek to extend its boundaries and find fuller expression,’ Wattles wrote.

I was an only child, so I really struggled with the idea of giving because I had never shared; everything was mine. So, when Dad told me to start giving, it was a difficult concept for me. Obviously, I tried. My wife, Tharshiny, is a great giver like my father. I am still learning

but it is my paradigm as an only child to expect to keep everything for me – studying these concepts has changed me but there remains much to learn.

Dad used to give everything that he got, and I always asked him how he would get things back when he needed them. I remember once, as an eight-year-old, he was giving out lots of papers to everybody and I worried what would happen if I wanted to use that paper to wrap things or something silly. Any child wants to keep things, and Dad said, ‘Do not worry about it. If you need paper to wrap something, that paper will arrive. Somebody will bring it for you.’ I asked how, but he told me that I was over-analysing, ‘How do you know you will ever even have a need,’ he said. If you need something it will come back, but that may not ever happen. This is the extraordinary teaching that my father shared, and I now feel it is my duty to put it into this book and help more people understand what he taught. As I have said many times, I have not yet got to where I would like to be. I am learning every day and I make so many mistakes every day, but at least when I do make mistakes, I can quickly check myself.

‘The universe is a great living presence, always moving inherently towards more life and fuller functioning,’ Wattles said. Nature is formed for the advancement of life. Its objective is the increase of life because the spirit is always looking for more expression. For this reason, everything that can possibly administer in our life can be beautifully provided if we know how to access it – not to take it, to access it; Dad said we just have to figure out how.

Dad never had a deposit account, he only ever had current

accounts. In fact, after he passed away, we found one account that he had put however many thousand Sri Lankan rupees into when I was born. But Dad always said to me not to save. Perhaps he thought he made an investment, and I still have that cash that he invested for me.

Dad used to say that we are not kept poor or unhappy, but there is a supply we need to access. I will talk more about this with the idea of a pie. This is a great story I heard in one of Bob Proctor's recent seminars. You may have a pie and you cut the pie into five pieces and share the pie with others. The physical senses think the pie has five pieces, five shares, but in fact there are other dimensions. If the size of the pie increases, the bigger the pie, the bigger the slices. Sometimes we misunderstand that, so we keep consuming the little pie and taking our piece. But if you start to think of the pie as the universe, you can see that the size of the piece that is going to come to you will be bigger, as long as you operate with the laws we are talking about. If you follow these principles, life will be fun, and the flow will be free. You will get opportunities and you will access them because you are in that thought process.

Opportunity cannot be monopolised because it is everywhere, but still sometimes the opportunities are not there for us. We blame circumstances, conditions, even other people. But what we are not grasping is that everything is internal and is happening within us. If we really want something, we do not need to go and ask somebody, we just need to work with our conscious mind, our subconscious mind, and then internalise the idea, emotionalise the idea, and the body moves. You cannot stop the body.

For me, a silly example is that I like my wine and there are times when I say I am not going to drink wine for X number of days, or only drink wine or eat chocolates on particular occasions. These are two things I absolutely love, but obviously if I do it every day, my old paradigms mean I put weight on again. I do not shift that because my psyche is not accepting that. That is a big problem I am still working on.

You cannot just want to control your behaviour. The only way to do it is to keep thinking about the idea, emotionalise the idea, and by doing that you will change. But as soon as I think about a lovely glass of Chardonnay or Bordeaux, I am straight back into my bottle of wine.

It is important to understand this invisible supply. You need to ask why the majority of the world's humans have their future in their own hands but do nothing. In the United Kingdom, we live in a good environment, but coming from a third world country you look around and ask why are people not able to do that? It is because they are not thinking like that and not understanding those things. Once they understand these concepts and operate within the laws, they will attract the right things. The law of attraction brings success through doing certain things in a certain way.

Those who do things in a certain way, whether on purpose or accidentally, succeed and have a fantastic life, enjoying every moment. Those who do not do things in this certain way, no matter how hard they work, or how able they are, remain unhappy and unsuccessful, poor and frustrated. Those who do not do things in



this certain way and think in a certain way, may toil every day but the results will not come.

You need to understand that it is natural law that life causes bring life effects, so any human that learns to do things in this certain way will see their life become a joy. But it is not easy to implement. The concepts are simple but hard to implement. My view is, because it is hard, I don't want to walk away, I want to keep improving myself. I can see that by continuing to improve myself, I will achieve success – success is the progressive realisation of a worthy goal.

Getting successful, getting happiness, getting richer and getting what you want to achieve, is this not natural? Absolutely not, Dad said. If it were, all the people in certain areas would become wealthy or successful while those of other towns would be poor. The inhabitants of one state would all roll in wealth and opulence, while those of the adjoining state would be in poverty. It does not work like that. We frequently see successful and not successful, rich and poor, happy and unhappy, living in the same environment, even the same neighbourhood. They are often engaged in the same profession.

When two people are in the same area and the same business, one phenomenally successful while the other remains incredibly poor and miserable, this shows that getting successful is not primarily a matter of environment. Think about sports personalities, where one brother achieves gold medals while the other pursues other recreations. Think of two siblings, where one has a happy married life and the other one does not. Some environments may be more favourable than others, Dad said and that is true. You must be careful about

which environment you choose. But when two people are in the same business, in the same neighbourhood, and one gets successful while the other fails, it shows how opulence and happiness are the result of doing things in a certain way.

Some environments may be more favourable than others. You are a product of your DNA and a product of your environment, which you cannot control. I did not control the colour of my skin or the way I look. There is nothing I can do about those. In my early life, I was in an environment I did not choose; those many years of war were not my choice. But when I was 20, I was given the opportunity to come to this wonderful country, and this environment is fantastic. It has enabled me to discover who I am and my involvement now in the United Kingdom and the United States, the two best nations in the world for free market economy and free thinking, shows me you can do whatever you like in your life and achieve whatever you want to achieve. Our universities are fantastic, our leadership programmes are fantastic. I am not saying that is not also the case elsewhere in the world, because I have not experienced elsewhere, but I can clearly say in the United Kingdom, you can choose the right environment and achieve your dreams.

Still, there are so many people who come to the United Kingdom but continue to live as they did in their old environment. I am not saying that is right or wrong, it is their decision. But if you want to grow and expand your thinking, the United Kingdom is a fantastic breeding ground to achieve what you want to achieve.

So, location does count for something. One would not go to the

heart of the Sahara and expect to do so well. That is where your wisdom and ability to make judgements comes in, which comes with your higher intellectual faculties. Dad was wonderful to give me the opportunity when I was 20 years old, because if Dad decided I could not leave Sri Lanka, I would not have had a choice. In Sri Lankan culture parents have a huge amount of control but when I said that I did not want to live my life where I was born, that I was not happy and I wanted to go to the United Kingdom, Dad listened. Initially, he said I should graduate in Sri Lanka and then go but I kept speaking to him, telling him I really needed to go and that I wanted to explore the world and then he enabled me.

At that time, I was absolutely not going to give up. Before that, there were many times Dad had taken me to different towns because of the war, and after a few weeks I would return home with a list of excuses why I could not live in that other town. I had a fantastic lifestyle of opulence at home. But when I made up my mind to leave Sri Lanka, I was never going back. I knew my life would be here in the United Kingdom and my dad always told me how important it was that I integrated into this country and respected British values. I have tried to become a beacon of Britishness, particularly in the post-Brexit world where the United Kingdom can be a beacon of power and grow and flourish in this period of change.

Mum and Dad are now cremated in this wonderful land, in a place called Watford Crematorium, where we have a beautiful rose garden in their memory. Now, I am absolutely sure where I am going to request that my ashes go when the time comes for me.

So, opportunity is something presented to you because you have invited it; because on your own, in secret, you have been thinking the right thoughts. When it comes, obviously depending on your level of emotional involvement, that opportunity should be taken fully as long as you do certain things in a certain way.

## CHAPTER 18

### LAWS

**D**ad always emphasised that when we talk about laws, we are not talking about manmade laws. ‘There are a lot of manmade laws out there,’ he said, ‘and those are not what you need to focus on.’ When Clay Christensen at Harvard Business School told me in 2016 that I needed to understand the difference between manmade laws and natural laws, that is when it all started to come together.

Manmade laws are human, self-created laws to regulate interactions in a country or a region. Each country has its own laws, and, in that jurisdiction, those laws should be respected. But we are talking about natural laws, which dictate how the world works. When Dad talked about these laws, he did not draw on scientific experience or explanations, but I am now able to talk about these concepts with the benefit of science and research behind me.

First, Dad talked about the law of perpetual transmutation, which

explains that everything in the universe as a whole and in its parts, exists in an ocean of motion. Motion is the only thing that is constant.

Change is energy's only attribute that is apparent to our material senses. This is where thought energy comes in and the idea of non-physical energy. You can develop your thoughts and your conscious mind, emotionalise those ideas and steer ideas and emotions into your subconscious mind so that the body then moves. Emotions are expressed through the body, the body is moved into action, and that produces the results. This is accepted within the law of transmutation.

Transmutation means, in effect, changing one form of energy into another. This is how thought energy moves into physical form. Dad believed that if you really want to achieve something, all you need is your thought, then you internalise that into action and it transmutes into physical form.

The images we hold in our mind materialise into results in our life. Dad said that whatever you seek to achieve, put those images into your subconscious mind, take action and that will bring results.

Next is the law of relativity. Dad said you are not big, you are not small – size only depends on who you are comparing yourself to. Similarly, you are not rich, you are not poor. You are not winning, you are not losing, you are simply comparing. He said to look at someone walking barefoot versus someone with shoes, or someone with just one leg. The person walking barefoot is neither well off, nor the most disadvantaged.

When the law of relativity is properly understood, there is something

better for everyone, and something worse. You can do something better than every person you meet. When you fixate on something you cannot do that another person has mastered or owns, you will not feel good – it could be a skill, a physical situation, or a possession. You are using the law against yourself if you start comparing and thinking you are not well off. All things are relative. If someone says a company has made £1 million profit, compare that to a company that has made £100 million profit, versus a business that is losing money.

All these laws are related to each other and correspond to each other, the laws of the little and the laws of the great. There is no big or little, fast, or slow. When you understand this, life becomes easy. The much discussed fourth dimension, whether you call it the sixth sense or the intangible, is nothing more than the vibration you are in. Again, all states of vibration are either high or low only by comparison.

In understanding the concept of relativity, the key is wherever you are, everything in life is just this. This is where mindfulness comes along; just be present, do not worry about the past or the future. The present just is; we make it what it is. Dad used to tell me to count the number of my blessings and whatever you want to achieve, you can achieve if you understand this.

The law of relativity means nothing is good or bad, big, or small. Practise relating your situation to something much worse and things will always look good.

Next, we move onto the law of vibration and attraction, which is much discussed and very often misunderstood. Everything vibrates, nothing rests. We live in an ocean of motion, which truly contains the

great secret of life. You are always moving towards something and it is always moving towards you. This is where the intuitive factors of human come to life.

Dad said that when you feel bad, you can change that by thinking positive thoughts. When you pick up a bad feeling from another person, do not let it get you down. I was bad at this and am still improving – it is not easy. My mum had the same qualities and I have made many mistakes. Once, on a trip to a New York restaurant, I got very annoyed when I should not have done; on that day I vowed it would be the last time I ever got annoyed with my children or with anybody. There are times when you go back to your bad habits and paradigms, but Dad always had a fantastic ability not to get annoyed at all, I never saw him anything other than calm. He taught me that calmness of mind is so important. I shall never get annoyed at my two daughters, Sharanie and Dharanie.

Your thoughts are vibrations that you send off into that unknown. When you concentrate, these vibrations are stronger and penetrating. It is the most important vibration. Dad often said we are the only ones who can think for ourselves. That is the difference between us and animals, we can think and thus we can create.

By thinking, we can emotionalise that thinking into our subconscious mind and set the law of attraction in motion. ‘You should always be happy, son,’ Dad used to say. Did I listen and understand that? Perhaps not – but I see it now. You should always be delighted with yourself because your thoughts control the vibration of your physical body.

Dad believed if you have a disease, you created it. He never went



to hospital in his life, before he died aged 72, and he believed the body is the servant of the mind. He said the body replays the operations of the mind, whether they are deliberately chosen or automatically expressed. The problem is with those that are automatically expressed because it is exceedingly difficult to change those habits. James Allen wrote that at the bidding of unlawful thoughts, the body can get into disease. At the command of glad and beautiful thoughts, it becomes youthful beauty.

Disease and health are things you create, Dad told me, and are rooted in thought. This was difficult for me to fully grasp, and still is. If it were that easy, I am sure there would not be diseases. But I believe the key element is automatically expressed. We must deliberately choose not to think negatively.

‘Sickly thoughts will express themselves through a sickly body,’ Dad said. Allen also wrote that thoughts of fear have been known to kill a man ‘as speedily as a bullet’ and continue to kill thousands of people, just as surely though less rapidly. People who live in fear of disease are the people who get it.

It is difficult to say this at the time of Covid-19, but I can only talk about Dad. For 72 years he was never sick, never went to hospital, never had an operation and rarely took medicine. He took control and he had a fantastic life, enjoying food and drink in moderation. He mastered how to deliberately control his mind and his body.

Anxiety quickly demobilises the mind and the body and lays it open to the entrance of disease. It is so important to understand, in this Covid-19 world, that impure thoughts, even not physically indulged,

will soon shatter the nervous system. Strong, pure and happy thoughts build up the body in grace and happiness. The body is a delicate and plastic instrument, Allen said, that responds readily to the thoughts by which it is impressed, and thoughts will produce their own effects, good or bad, upon it.

‘Humans continue to have impure and poisoned blood so long as they have unclean thoughts,’ Dad used to tell me. This is so important: after the unclean thought, all you get is a corrupt body. This also comes from Allen. Thought is the fountain of action, and like a manifestation, if you make the fountain pure, all will be pure. Dad talked about how a change of diet will not help a man who will not change his thoughts and, as I have said, I have struggled with my weight. He said just changing the diet will not help a man, he must change his thoughts. ‘If a man makes his thoughts pure, he no longer desires impure things. If you perfect the body and the mind, you will have a perfect life,’ Dad said. ‘If you renew the body and beautify the mind, then life is fine.’

Dad talked about someone he knew who lived to 100 years old, which he believed was because she was always positive and happy. ‘There is no physician like cheerful thought to nourish your body,’ he used to say.

Our conscious awareness of vibration is referred to as feelings, therefore when I say I feel good or bad, I am really declaring that I am in either a positive or negative scenario. The law of vibration declares that everything moves, nothing rests. The brain is the instrument that you use to move your entire being into a different vibration. The brain is your vibratory switching station. The brain will not think, but you

think with your brain – this is so important. Your brain is something you need to use to improve your life. Dad would often say, ‘Use your brain!’ when he was frustrated.

When you say you are thinking something, what you are really doing is choosing to activate certain brain cells that in turn affect your central nervous system and move you into one of the vibrations that those deeper cells are governing. Attraction immediately goes to work where you store your mental pictures and images, which are so important to emotionalise. They then go through the nervous system, through the body, the body acts, and natural reaction kicks in. If the cells that you activate have sad or negative images, you will move into negative vibration; you cannot stop it. If they have happy images, you will move into positive vibration and feel good. ‘Choose happy pictures and you must feel good because vibration is everything,’ Dad said.

The next law is the law of polarity, which talks about how everything in the universe has its opposite – no inside without outside. If something you consider to be bad happens in your life, there has to be something good about it. Like the story I have told earlier in this book, of the king going with his assistant into the forest and losing his finger, only for his assistant to say that was a good thing.

If something occurs that is only a little bad, you can work your way to the other side, and you will find there only a little good. But the bigger the bad, the greater the positive when you come out the other side. But this is difficult to comprehend when you are in that negative position, I know. Think about these ideas and see how you can look at everything in a positive and a negative way. If you can understand

this, then when something goes wrong, you know that something will go right.

Under the law of polarity, one story Dad told is one I thought about when Dad had his accident and went into a coma. I was by his bedside as his ECG was going up and down. I remembered Dad saying life is like that, like an ECG going up and down, and the day that it is flat, you are dead. That ECG wasn't him, it was the life-support machine doing the work. After 24 hours, I still vividly remember, the doctor coming to me and saying, 'I think the machine is not going to save your dad because he has decided to leave.'

It was very emotional; Mum was there, Tharshiny was there, and we were far away from home in Bournemouth Hospital. There was a decision that I needed to make; the NHS did a fantastic job. I spoke to the doctor – it is very emotional just to remember it – and I asked if there was any chance that Dad might decide to come back. The doctor said he could go on for another four or five days, but he would be a vegetable, and that hurt me so much. I made the decision to turn off the machine. And then, when the buttons were switched off, I had a small hope that he might just wake up, but he had made up his mind. So, I always think, like life, the ECG was going up and down, up and down, and then when it went flat, he was gone.

Now, let us move on to the law of rhythm. The law of rhythm embodies the truth that everything is moving and there is a flow. There is a reaction to every action. Something must advance when anything retreats, something must rise when anything sinks.

This law governs the movement of the planets and the orbits and

manifests in the minerals and vegetables. We cannot see it, but we are hanging on this gravity. Humans can observe this law in their mental, physical and emotional state. ‘The law of rhythm is intangible, and it is universal. It can be observed in the rising and setting of the sun,’ Dad told me.

Obviously, this is difficult to comprehend but the law of rhythm is, like many of these laws, intangible. So do take time to learn and understand these ideas. I am still learning and understanding what my dad talked about for all those years. Clay woke me up to it in 2016 at Harvard Business School; until that point, these conversations did not even come back to me.

The coming and going of the seasons is the law of rhythm, nobody can force it. The rhythm and swing of consciousness and unconsciousness within the human being is the law of rhythm too and is beautiful to understand. ‘You are not going to feel good all the time,’ Dad said, ‘no one does. If you did, you would not even know it. The low feelings are what permit you to enjoy the high feelings. You would not know what high is if you had never been low.’

There will always be highs and lows in life; reason gives us the ability to choose our thoughts and we have free will. Even when you are on a natural downswing, you can choose good thoughts with your free will and move up. That comes down to the law of cause and effect that I have mentioned many times. There is no such thing as chance. Everything happens according to law; nothing in the entire universe ever happens unless it occurs according to law. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive of starting a new chain of causation for the

simple reason that every effect must have a cause and in turn that cause must have an effect, because we have a perpetual never-ending cycle of cause and effect. Causation is the capacity of one variable to influence another.

Ralph Waldo Emerson talked about the law of cause and effect as the law of laws. He said this is everything. We are all interested in our results – our physical health, our relationships, our earnings, our success, our material income – but we must concentrate on the cause and the effect will automatically take care of itself. That is how this law works.

Once we understand these laws, everything becomes simple. When you put a positive out, you get a positive back. When you put a negative out, you get back the same negative. Dad said there is no point in talking about this, just use it. When someone gives you a positive, give one right back. When someone sends you a negative, Dad always told me to just step aside and let it keep on going – just let it go.

The final law to talk about is the law of gender. The law of gender manifests in all things, as the masculine and the feminine. It is the law that governs what we know as creation. The law of creation is often misunderstood, for in reality nothing is ever created. All new things merely result from the changing of something to another form, transmutation into something else that now is.

The law of gender manifests in the animal kingdom as creating family or children. It also manifests in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, where without the dual principle of male and female in all things there could not be perpetual motion or regeneration. This law

finally closes the cycle and completes the law of nature. This is the truth, Dad said, this is creation.

Once you understand this law you must emotionalise it, practise it, and discipline yourself. This law decrees that everything in nature is both male and female because both are required for life to exist. Obviously, there are now different types of relationships, but nevertheless the law of gender is still there. While there is attraction between same-sex couples, that does not mean this law is not in existence.

This law also decrees that all seeds – and ideas are spiritual seeds – have a gestation or incubation period before they manifest. In other words, when you choose a goal or an idea, a definite period of time must lapse before that idea manifests in the physical world. All ideas move into form at the right time, and we must believe in that right time. If you have patience, you will have everything you want. Dad said, ‘Mahan, don’t please be impatient.’ He told me my goals will manifest when the time is right, and I must know they will.

This is an interesting chapter because Dad talked quite a lot about scientific elements when I was a child, and about laws. Obviously, I did not understand any of it really until I was re-introduced to the topic a decade after I lost Dad, when I was 46. Since then, just understanding these simple laws and learning from Clay at Harvard Business School has really helped me to look at things differently. I know that I am not there yet, and I am still pursuing my own journey to a growth mindset.

## CHAPTER 19

### WAYS

**W**hen I talk about ways, I am talking about the way we think, the way we act, and the way we behave. Dad said people become successful, not because of their theoretical knowledge, but because they think and do things in a certain way. Dad used to say, ‘If you do certain things in a certain way you will absolutely succeed.’

He urged me to be fair in all my dealings, though that is not to say I should not drive bargains. You must always be fair and think about the other side, never do anything wrong by the other party, but that does not mean you should not drive a bargain. This is particularly important – in any contract or transaction, even if you feel inside that you are acting unfairly, you should raise that. You do not have to get something for nothing. Give every person more than you take from them, he said.

A similar theory is mentioned in the literature, which says that you



cannot give anyone more in cash value than you take from them, but you can give more in use value than the cash value you take. In the UK, Dad talked about the low-cost telecoms companies, saying that if someone is paying £5 to talk to their mother in India or in Africa, think about the use value they are getting; they may not have spoken to their mother for years.

Prices used to be so much higher; in 1990 when I came to the UK as a student, I paid £2 per minute to make a call to Australia. At that time, Mum asked my uncle Balan in Australia to provide me with a sponsorship letter. I was incredibly grateful for his kind gesture and I made a call when I came to the UK to thank him; I even remember the cost of that call in 1990.

But the point is, the use value should always be more than the cash value. When that is the case, those that sold the telecoms cards could never be wrong. This book is another example. This book is priced at about £10, and while the paper and the ink may cost less than that, the value of this book is far more. If you can understand these principles – which combine so many teachings, not just from Dad but from Bob Proctor, Clay Christensen, Napoleon Hill and many others – and if you can incorporate them into your life, the value will be significant and can potentially, absolutely transform your future. It is all about doing certain things, in a certain way, every day, and that makes the biggest success.

If you have something you are trying to sell, every time please think about whether the person buying is getting a great use value. Dad always told me to operate in a creative, not competitive, position.

‘Do not compete with anyone, and if you are selling any person anything that does not add more to their lives than it costs, then think about it and you must stop,’ wrote Wattles. You do not have to beat anyone in business; if you are in a business that does beat people, then get out of it because it has no long-term benefit.

Wattles also said that if you give everyone more in use value than you take in cash value, you are adding to the life of the world with every transaction. If you have people working for you, take from them more than in the cash value than you pay them, but organise your business so it is filled with the principle of advancement; each of your employees – who means to do so – should be able to advance a little every day. Make your business deliver for your employees, and then it will grow.

You can conduct your business so that it will be a ladder for every employee who takes the trouble to climb towards success. When you create a successful business, those individuals will stay with you. If you want to achieve short-term benefits, that will not give you long-term success.

Dad said the desire of thinking for fuller life and better living has driven the creation of everything in this world. We can have anything that we want as long as we can work within these principles. The original intangible wants us to live and wants us to progress, but we need to understand the ways.

If you fix upon your consciousness the fact that your desire for the possession of success, richness, happiness and peace of mind is at one with the desire of the intangible, those things will come to light. Dad

said that all that is possible is seeking expression through us. Wattles wrote about this too. Nothing is created or destroyed. Everything is there and we need to use our awareness to achieve it.

The way to achieve is to focus and express to nature, not fixate on poverty or believe that is what you are destined for. Dad did not believe that. ‘If you think riches and success,’ he said, ‘you absolutely will live in opulence.’

If these thoughts are not true, how come there are some people who are extraordinarily successful and others who are not. Dad spent a lot of time talking about this. Clearly, I cannot say I fully emotionally live with all the ideas, but I am trying to practise them every day and I share these ideas with others.

When we talk about thinking in a certain way, it is important that we form a clear and certain view of what we want. Dad said that you cannot transmit an idea to someone if you use random words and random vocabulary – the other person will not understand. It is not enough to have a general desire, you need to be entirely specific about what you want. Many people fail to engage in this thinking, and do not succeed because they are not acting or thinking in a certain way.

‘It is not enough that you should have a wish to travel, that is a waste of time,’ said Wattles. If you were going to send a telegram to a friend, you would not send letters of the alphabet and let him or her construct the message for themselves, nor would you take words at random from the dictionary – you would send a coherent sentence that meant something. When you try to impress your wants and desires on nature, you must remember the same rule applies. If you

are vague, you will not receive. Dad would ask me if I knew exactly what I wanted and continued to say I would never be successful if I did not have creative ideas.

Dad told me, 'Go for your desires, have a clear picture of what you want, and take action every day.' Think of the sailor, who knows which port they are going to, even if they do not know their exact route. If they do not know where they are sailing to, there is no chance they will get there. Be clear on the destination even if not the route. If you believe in it, it absolutely must happen.

You do not need to do exercises in concentration, some of which have religious connotations. These are there, and Dad did not say they were right or wrong, but he did say that if you want to create something, that is not the way to create.

He believed that leisure time is important. Spend as much of your leisure time as you can thinking of what you want, son. Once you know that you really want something, you really do not need to do anything, because it automatically happens in your mind. And Wattles said the only thing you need to concentrate on is the things that you do not REALLY want. It is the things you do not care about passionately that require effort, so fix your attention on them. Unless you really want to become successful, so the desire is so strong it holds your direct purpose as the magnetic pole holds the needle of a compass, it will hardly be worthwhile for you to try to carry out your effort.

Dad talked about the magnet, which can only attract a metal, it can never attract rubber. If you do not attract something you think you need and you are thinking in a certain way, acting in a certain way and

it is still not happening, it is not something you are meant to attract. Move forward, move on.

These methods will work if people are willing to overcome mental laziness. Dad talked about laziness, sluggishness and lethargy, not physical but mental. The more definite you are of your desire, you should think about it, dwell on it, and bring out its delightful details. When we were building our new house in Sri Lanka, I remember Mum and Dad talking about the details of every single element. They focused on every little detail, to create it. The stronger your desire, the easier it will be to hold it in your mind and then hold it in your hand.

The problem is our paradigms – the little voices that tell us we are not able to do it, that we cannot achieve it, and that cause us to lose focus. ‘Dreaming alone is not enough,’ Dad said. Behind your clear vision, there must be an underlying purpose to bring out in tangible expression. Behind this purpose must be an unwavering faith that the thing is already yours.

Bob Proctor talks about how you can fuse from the future into the current, and that is also what Dad was talking about. Wattles also wrote about these ideas. Live in the new house, mentally, until it takes form around you.

Dad used to say to me, see the things you want as if they are around you, then have gratitude and make use of them in your imagination just as you will when they are your tangible possessions. And Wattles said we should dwell upon a mental picture, take possession of it and

be grateful. Hold this mental image and take ownership. Do not waver for an instant in your faith that it will not work. This is thinking in a certain way.

The person who can sincerely thank nature for things he is yet to receive is working in a different plain of imagination. Our path is to intelligently formulate our desires for things that make for a larger life, to arrange these desires into a coherent whole, and to impress this into the formless substance we call nature. And Dad said you do not make this impression by repeating strings of words; you make it by holding a vision with unshakeable purpose. To attain it, you need faith - the ability to see the invisible, believe in the incredible and receive what the masses think is impossible.

You cannot make an impression if you do not take action. That is what we need to understand. Believe we will receive it and believe it will be there, and absolutely take action.

Imagine an environment and a financial position exactly as you want it, and you will get it. Live all the time in that mental environment until it takes physical shape. Remember it is faith and purpose in the use of the imagination that makes the difference between a scientist, a dreamer and a do-er. Thinking in a certain way is important, and that thinking is supplemented by acting in a certain way.

So, what is this acting in a certain way? We have said many times that thought is the creative power. Thinking in a certain way will bring success, but you must not rely on thought alone. ‘Paying no attention to personal action,’ Dad said, ‘is the mistake many people make – failing to connect thought with action.’

‘We have not yet reached the stage of development,’ Dad said, ‘where just by thinking something it comes into your hand, like black magic. Dad said that is absolutely not possible.’

And he believed it was not enough for a person just to think, because their actions must supplement their thoughts. By thought you can cause anything to come to you, but for it to come into your wallet, you must take action, he always told me. Under nature’s laws, someone will be assisting you and other people’s actions will bring you what you want. It will flow towards you, but you must arrange your business so that when that opportunity comes and knocks on your door, you are ready. If you are not prepared, you will miss a chance. So, prepare yourself for that moment. Your thought makes all things come towards you, but you still need to take action.

Dad said that we must always retain vision, stick to our purpose, maintain faith, have deep gratitude, and act in a certain way. These ideas come from Wattles and mean we should appropriate what is ours when it comes to us. This is where readiness to receive an opportunity comes from. That comes with study and understanding the laws of nature. When it comes to preparedness, our intellectual faculties are important: thinking in a certain way, acting in a certain way, and taking action every day.

Through thought, the thing you want is brought to you; by action, you receive it. ‘Whatever your action,’ Dad said, ‘it is evident that you must act now. Not tomorrow, not the day after; do not procrastinate, take action now. You cannot act in the past. It is essential that through the clarity of your mental vision you dismiss

the past from your mind.’ Dad said, ‘Forget about the past, look to the future and take action.’

You cannot act in the future either, for the future is not yet here. You cannot tell how you will want to act in the future until it arrives. Because you are not in the right business or the right environment today, do not think that you should postpone your action. Dad said that is a waste of time. Take action now and the doors will open. Do not spend time in the present, thinking about the best actions to take in the future.

I have now studied in some of the best business schools in the UK and USA, learning for hours about contingency planning, but guess what, if you plan for negativity you get it. I am not saying you should not plan, but Dad said I should always have faith in my ability to cope with the challenges that will come up, because my purpose is clear. If you act in the present with your mind on the future, your present will be disadvantaged.

Think about it, if you are trying to do something now, you are not giving 100% if your mind is on what you are going to do next. That is what mindfulness is all about: be present in the present. These are all similar philosophies. Focus on the present and take action, never just sit and wait for results to come. If you have a wonderful idea, take action. The only way to take action is to bring that idea into the subconscious mind. You cannot take an action until you go through the creative process.

‘There is never any time but now, and there never will be any time but now,’ Wattles wrote. Dad used to say that there are acres



of diamonds around you, so I should not waste time thinking about things elsewhere. You cannot act where you are not. You cannot act where you have been and you cannot act where you are going to be, Dad said. You can only act where you are now.

Dad used to say that we should not worry until the worry worries you; think about what serves you and take action today. Do today's work well and forget about tomorrow or yesterday. Do not try to do tomorrow's work today and do not wait for something to change before you act. Make the change yourself.

When I was at Prudential I used to come in from work and complain that something was not working, or someone was not doing the right thing. Dad would listen and tell me to change it, fix it. I would explain it is someone else doing something that is affecting me, not me. But he would still tell me that I must fix it and take action. Obviously, I could not understand that, and I am sure lots of people would feel the same. I kept saying it is not my mistake. But he said, 'Everything is you, son. You fix yourself and everything else will fix.'

Do not spend time thinking about things without taking action. Do not cast about seeking new things to do. Once there is a meaning, or a purpose, once you believe in something, then go ahead. Hold the vision of what you want and then act on it with faith.

'Thinking is the basis on which all things are made and which permeates, penetrates and fulfils what we want to achieve,' Wattles said. This is where the whole of *The Power of Learning from DAD* is incredibly useful.

To finish off with Dad's words; he said you must form a clear mental picture of what you want, hold on to that picture, have gratitude, and have faith. If you do this every day, and act every day towards what you want, that is the way to lead your life. That way is the way towards anything in this world that you want to achieve.

## CHAPTER 20

### CHARACTER

**D**ad always valued character as one of the most important things in life, which is why, when we started Regent, we began with the ethos that, the end result of education is character. Character has a huge part to play in life and is a huge part of what Dad taught me. He talked about it a lot and clearly it is a vast topic, so I will cover some of the ideas he shared here.

Dad believed character was linked to thought because, as humans, our thinking makes our character. Humans literally are what they think about, and our character is effectively a composite of our thoughts.

Dad said that as the plant springs from one seed, so every act of man or woman springs from thought. This applies to spontaneous acts as much as it does to those that have been long thought-out. Normally the spontaneous, unpremeditated acts are driven by your paradigms and your habits, while deliberate acts are driven by habits but also by being

conscious that with your habits you can control your actions; something that is incredibly hard. While writing this book, I have faced various incidents where my own behaviour was challenged, and I realised it was to do with my own thoughts rather than anybody else's actions.

Action comes from thought and man can choose whether he is in joy or suffering. By thought, we can build, or we can destroy. Man is effectively in growth and is continuously growing, whether he likes it or not. 'Man is not a static object,' Dad said, 'but growth is continuous.'

Humans are made or unmade by themselves. Humans have huge power; with intelligence and love in the right combination, life becomes a joy. Human is always the master, even in his weakest state.

Character is forged by the effects of our environment. We can compare the human mind to a garden, which can be well cultivated or can be badly neglected. I read a story about a farmer who had a beautiful farm, in which there were plentiful trees and rose gardens. One day an onlooker complimented him on his farm, observing that nature had given him everything. The farmer agreed and said he was incredibly grateful. 'But,' he said, 'you should have seen the farm when nature had it alone.' The farmer understood that everyone is given a farm to work with and it is up to us to cultivate it.

Just like the farmer who looks after his plot well, so must we look after our minds, by keeping out negative thoughts. These useless thoughts are created by us, and we can choose not to have them. In this way, a man discovers that he is that master, the gardener, the director of his life. Dad always said, 'Be the main man in the movie, never be a supporting actor.'

Thought and character are one. What happens inside, Dad said, always shows outside. This does not mean that a man's circumstances at any given time are an indication of who he is, for circumstances make an impact. But every human is where he is by the law of being, the laws of nature.

As a progressive and evolving beings, humans are where they belong. Every man or woman knows that circumstances grow out of thought if they practise self-control, which Dad said is incredibly important. This is something I am still improving. Humans will notice that the alteration of circumstances can occur through self-control and self-purification.

Nature attracts good things to life if people are thinking about good things. The outer world of circumstances shapes itself through the inner world of thought. Both pleasant and unpleasant external conditions are factors.

Humans do not attract what they want, but what they are. It is so important to understand that in the law of attraction, what we attract is what we are thinking inside our mind. 'Humans are often keen to improve their circumstances, but do nothing to improve themselves,' Dad said. If you are constantly saying you want to change, but you are not doing anything, you are not willing to improve so you remain impounded. The human who does not think of self-improvement will never succeed in what they want. Here is a man who can be rich or poor by their actions.

Circumstances are complicated. Thought is so deeply rooted, and the conditions of happiness vary so much between individuals, that

the entire human condition is judged using external factors, when in fact, it is everything to do with internal factors.

‘A human may be honest in certain directions and suffer problems, while the dishonest person looks to be achieving. The honest person cannot understand why they are not getting good results. There are sometimes, deeper issues,’ Dad said. What you see outside may not be the full story; sometimes that honest person may in fact be dishonest. Dad believed in the old saying, ‘Never judge a book by its cover.’ By understanding this, and building knowledge, you will create a happy life.

A human only begins to be human when he starts to understand the law of nature. The proof is in every person, and it therefore makes for easy investigation by systemic development of study and regular practice of these concepts. Humans think their thoughts can be kept secret, but that is not true. A thought rapidly turns into a habit, and a habit turns into circumstances. A man or woman might think in secret, but it will become a reality. Therefore, any thoughts may for a period be kept secret, but they will turn into actions and change your circumstances. Therefore, Dad said, do not entertain bad thoughts because you will eventually act upon them. These ideas can be directly linked back to the work of Clay Christensen and Bob Proctor.

Thoughts crystallise into habits of good or bad, depending on the habits you are trying to achieve. Thoughts of every kind crystallise, and if you find yourself in a state of confusion between your positive habits versus your negative habits – your fear, your doubt, your indecision – you are confused as a human being. This is where mental health

issues, anxiety and disease arise. All are because we entertain negative thoughts that crystallise into unclear habits and dishonesty, which solidify into circumstances. If we can clean this up, life becomes a joy.

Dad said that if a person stops having negative thoughts, the world will move in their favour. He also said we must encourage good thoughts to make good things happen. Just entertain good thoughts, mahan, he said. ‘Think good of everyone, be good to everyone, and then the world is your baby.’

Understanding this, leads to purpose. Every thought is linked to purpose and no intelligent accomplishment can be achieved without purpose. Still, the majority of humans do not have a purpose, they do not have a goal, and if they do have a goal, they do not have an exact timeline for achieving that. Dad said, how can you have life without a purpose? It is like the driver who does not know where they are going. You need to know exactly where you are going and then you will get there. If you do not have a goal, every day you are getting up without purpose.

‘Those who have no central purpose in their life fall easily into worries, fears, troubles and self-pity,’ wrote Allen, all of which indicates weakness. They constantly blame circumstances and others.

A human should conceive a legitimate purpose in his heart and set out to accomplish it. He should make this purpose and think about it every day, emotionalise it, and take action. It may be intangible, because life is intangible and therefore many of the things we seek to achieve in life are intangible. But to have no goals in life is creating weakness; to begin to think with purpose is to enter the ranks of those

strong humans who recognise failure only as a temporary setback. There is no such thing as failure for a human being who has a clear purpose, who fearlessly attempts and masterfully accomplishes each and every day.

‘Having conceived our purpose,’ Allen said, ‘humans should mentally mark out a straight pathway to achievement, looking neither right nor left. No doubts or fears should ever be entertained, and the route should be effectively worked through every day. Thought allied fearlessly to purpose becomes creative force. He who knows this is ready to become something higher and stronger than a mere bundle of wavering thoughts, with a clear direction and a clear purpose, so he can achieve whatever he wants in life.’

Dad used to say that all that a man or woman achieves, and all that he or she fails to achieve, is a direct result of their own thoughts. In a justly ordered world, where losses or gains reflect your thinking, individual responsibility must be absolute, wrote Allen. ‘The strong man cannot help a weaker man unless the weaker man is willing to be helped,’ he said, ‘and even then, the weaker man must become strong of himself.’

As the saying goes, you need to do it by yourself, but you cannot do it alone. The man must, by his own efforts, develop the strength that he admires in others, but none but himself can alter his condition. ‘When you are admiring others,’ Dad always said, ‘never ever do so with jealousy. To admire others, to learn from others and to be inspired by others is good. But to engage in jealousy is effectively purposefully destroying your own life.’



Often people blame others for their misfortune. Do not waste your time on that, Dad said. The truth is that whoever is trying to damage others should just be ignored. Concentrate on your own world. If you have selfish thoughts you will fail, if you banish those thoughts, you are free.

‘Before a human can achieve anything, he must live above animal indulgence,’ said Allen. You need not, in order to succeed, give up all that matters to you in selflessness. Dad said it is very difficult to give up all selfishness and animality, but a portion of it must at least be sacrificed. This is an interesting concept, because what we are really talking about is that as human beings, because we are programmed in different ways, sometimes it is very difficult to change our lives, but day by day we become human.

Quoting Allen, Dad said that, there can be no progress or achievement without sacrifice. Nature does not favour the greedy, the dishonest or the vicious, though on the surface it may appear to do so. Nature helps the honest and it helps the person with the right mental attitude. Honesty is the best way.

All the great teachers, including my dad, have declared this in various forms. Allen said that man has always achieved a balanced life when they have honesty in their life. Achievement of any kind is the crown of effort and the success of life is walking with truth every day. All achievements, be they in business, society, or politics, are the result of definitely directed thoughts and are governed by the same laws. The only difference lies in the object of attainment.

Dad used to say if you sacrifice a little, your success and accomplishment will be little. He who will attain highly, must sacrifice greatly. What a beautiful way to link sacrifice to character.

In character, Dad also talked about calmness of mind – something he was passionate about. Dad used to say that a mind becomes a mind when you are making decisions. ‘Think about water,’ he said. ‘If water is calm, you can see what is below the surface. If it is not calm, you cannot see anything properly.’ That is how Dad explained calmness of mind. Calmness of mind is down to patience and self-control and is an indication of our experience, knowledge and wisdom.

The human becomes calm when he understands himself as a thought-evolving human being, because such knowledge necessitates the understanding of others and he sees more clearly how actions cause an effect. This goes back to the laws of nature. The calm human, having learned how to govern himself or herself, knows how to adapt to others and in turn has a calm, tranquil personality that creates success, Allen said. A strong, calm human is always loved and cherished by others. People want to be in their presence. Humanity surges with uncontrolled passion, which left ungoverned is blown away by human anxiety. Only the wise human, whose thoughts are controlled, makes life balanced.

In the world of satisfaction, happiness and success, self-control is a strength, right thought is mastery and calmness is power. If you mix all of that, life becomes a peaceful place. Dad said, this journey is not forever; for him it was 72 years, and for my grandfather it was 80 years. Being in that environment, my paradigm makes me think those

are the years that we are here to live. Nevertheless, it is true that we make our own lives. The dreamers are the saviours of the world, as the visible world is sustained by invisible human minds. We must have those dreamers, but the dreamers, as we said, have got to take action. By desiring to attain, and aspiring to achieve, the human that gives gratitude will achieve great success in their life.

The greatest achievement of humans is to understand that we have the ability to create. Dad used to say, ‘The oak is sleeping in the acorn, the bird is waiting inside the egg, and maybe some of the greatest powers, thinking and achievements are inside the human being.’ You must unleash that with your imagination, your desire and your purpose, and when you do, the world becomes a beautiful place to live.

Dad also said imagination and character are wonderful. Imagination and desire will take you to a role, but your character will keep you there. So, *The Power of Learning from DAD* has enabled me to understand what I have been studying for the past five years, ever since meeting Clay Christensen at Harvard Business School. These last five years have enabled me to converge some of Dad’s conversations with the greatest research that mankind has done in the past 100 years.

Some of these ideas are from the research, and I am linking Dad’s words to the research so that human beings like myself, and every son and daughter, can have the opportunity to understand and express these things. One regret I have is that I did not appreciate many of these wonderful things when he was alive. I knew there was something there, but I did not have the understanding to appreciate it.

I lost Dad in 2006 and now these things are coming to fruition and I understand the world better. Even though there is no way I have achieved everything I talk about in this book, it is what I am striving towards. I turn 50 on the day of publication, but I look forward to improving myself further and reading this book every day, because these are ideas that come from the heart. These are ideas that I have heard throughout my 50 years, and I will read this book every day until my end so that I can make myself even better.

When you read this book again and again, you will observe that the book has not changed, but you as the reader will change a great deal in terms of awareness. We know that change comes about through constant repetition, but also when humans endure emotional shock, usually when something goes terribly wrong, as happened to me in 2006.

You cannot wait for something negative to happen to make a change, but you have a choice to take action in your own way. Understanding these concepts and impressing them upon your subconscious mind can only come through study, and once you impress them upon your subconscious mind, your body moves. Keep sight of your goal, your destination, and take action.

# CHAPTER 21

## LEADERSHIP

**D**ad was my role model and my leader. I am sure every child, when they are growing up, looks to their father and their mother and they make a huge impression as leaders. Obviously, my dad made a massive impression. While I talk about leadership, I want to take a moment to look at how we lead in a challenging economy, and in particular in the current circumstances of a pandemic. There are some leadership qualities that are especially relevant for our readers on the launch date of 20 August 2020, so that is reflected in these ideas.

Dad used to say that every organisation, from the smallest to the largest, needs a leader. Organisations have their committees and their structures but, overall, every organisation, business or country needs strong and able leadership. Dad said the morale of an organisation is not a bottom-up exercise, but a top-down exercise. And he always stressed that the leader will always be just one person. He was clear on that.

If we look back through history, starting with Mahatma Gandhi and thinking about the great Prime Ministers, including Winston Churchill, Dad said there is only ever one leader. He said this lesson is based on the laws of nature. The true goal of all leaders is to get others to think of them as the leader, but the goal of the exceptional leader is to get people to think highly of themselves. That is the only type of leader that will endure, especially in the new world post-pandemic.

Take a moment and think of someone you can follow. I continue to follow Dad and learn from his ideas each day. We need to understand that the smallest and the largest companies, governments and institutions will always find that when they are in trouble they go to this one person. Sometimes there is no one person who is held out as the sole leader, perhaps there is a board of directors, but still thousands of shareholders will tend to look to one person for leadership, particularly in times of crisis. Wherever you find a successful going concern, there is always a strong leader. This is the most valuable person in society. In industry, they make the wheels turn and the entire economy work. This is the person who has been responsible for the growth of nations, where Mahatma Gandhi comes to mind.

Leaders are the employers of millions, they are the dreamers, the planners and the do-ers. A story springs to mind that is especially relevant during the pandemic, as the world is going into a recession. It is about a man who was always able to get a job, who could talk to people and provide solutions, and who could always help people. He analysed businesses, talked to other people in the same line, listened to problems, heard what was going wrong, talked for hours and studied, and then he began to think of ways and means by which businesses

might be improved. When he had done all his research, he went to the CEO or the Board and he said he knew how the business could be greatly improved. Then he would just send a quite simple line – that is all he sent. He always had lots of work.

So, building on this concept of a problem-solution continuum now, which I am spending a lot of time on, it is all about solving problems with positive mental attitude and expressing a willingness to pitch in and help when things are difficult.

What this man did first of all, was specialise. He had selected one line and decided that was where his future would be. Dad said to me many times, ‘Do not be Jack of all trades and a master of none.’ The best way to develop security that lasts a lifetime is to become outstanding in one particular line; be good at what you do.

People who knew what they were doing and where they were going sailed through the Great Depression and other downturns just as a large ship sails through a storm. It may not have been as comfortable as it could have been, but at least the crossing was a success. At least they did not drown; thousands of businesses actually prospered. But thousands also failed because they did not have a positive mindset and the right leader.

Dad always said that with the right leadership you can sail through any challenge. This is the time that true leaders are going to emerge, because the clock has been reset. In the Great Depression, organisations reset the clock, and many became successful. It was a great time for new leaders to emerge.

Regardless of economic ups and downs, industry will not shut down completely. As long as you are in the top 10% of people providing the service that you provide, you will be fine. ‘The people who suffer are the people who are not good at their jobs,’ Dad said. The men and women who become truly outstanding at what they do have the world in their palm. The person of confidence, with peace of mind, is the person who is quietly aware of their ability, be it a dealmaker, home maker, or country maker. Everybody knows they are capable because they carry great stature with them.

Dad told me, ‘Son, ask yourself if you are one of them. If not, start working on it right here, right now. Leadership has two important components. One is to do with the business or industry – you need to understand the business you are in. The second is the people you deal with, and that is the most important one.’

Dad said these things, and Clay talked about similar concepts in his book *How Will You Measure Your Life*, and I came to understand you need to know your job, your sector and everything about it, because knowledge is power. But you have also got to understand how to work with people. Leaders get work done through people. Teamwork is essential, up and down the line.

Dad never believed in line management. Even in the early 1980s I remember he used to say, we are not managing a line, we are managing people. Human relations are likely to be strained when people are asked to do things they have not planned themselves or they may not be keen to do. Dad said, ‘Mahan (son), everyone is in a leadership role. You get to lead only when you take responsibility.’



Dad also said a leader must be a strong originator. That person must be able to originate a constructive idea, concentrate on that idea, reject any ideas that others might present, and pursue their journey to a goal. ‘For that,’ he said, ‘you need guts. You need the ability to believe in and follow your instincts.’ That is what sometimes causes leaders to appear arrogant or cold-blooded, but the true leader knows where they are going and why they are going there and, as long as they work with the laws of nature, nothing will stop them.

Most people find this difficult to do, because our conscious mind is bombarded with lots of information and there are more experienced people who have done things before and are perceived to have the wisdom of the world. Forget it. Dad said that if you want to be a true leader, work within yourself. You need highly evolved will and the ability to concentrate on one thing. It is an intellectual factor that you can develop at any age. Age is not relevant, though there is a huge amount of research showing that once you are over 40, you become better at it because of experience. But age is not relevant – anybody can put up his hand and become a leader today.

Even when an individual has developed expertise in an area, that alone will not create a good leader. Dad said a good leader must also be a good follower. I have studied so many leadership books, theories and models; those are valuable, but what we are talking about here is the human side of leadership. Strong leaders have a deep appreciation for the creative ability of others. They are very much aware of how to work with other people’s minds. ‘It is, at the end of the day,’ Dad said, ‘a mind game. If you create the greatest minds and if you become a great mind, you can achieve anything.’

The truly effective leader, especially in the post-pandemic world, will know when to be an originator. It has been said many times that we can accomplish almost anything in our life if we do not care who gets the credit. ‘Please do not go for individual credit,’ Dad said, ‘just lead, even if you are not perceived to be the leader or not given the job to be the leader. People do not get promotions, they promote themselves.’

The effective leader clearly understands how to develop what is sometimes referred to as the composite personality. Dad said that to build a composite personality it is necessary to understand how human nature works and how the laws of nature work. We have talked about the conscious mind, the subconscious mind, the body, action, reaction, the laws of nature; you need an understanding of how to work with others and how to create a composite relationship. This is something where you need to understand the concept of conductive reasoning, where you create an idea with lots of thought and you bring ideas into your subconscious mind, leading to action. An understanding of this is so important – Dad said you need to understand how this machine works. Stephen R. Covey’s work in *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* captures these ideas as well.

The other thing that I have studied, and Carnegie mentioned it many times, is that when things go wrong, leaders need to make a decision. Dad said when you get up in the morning, if you are part of a team, just make sure you are part of the crew and not part of the cargo. He said the only people that will be let go are those that the leadership believes are part of the cargo. If the leader cannot see what you do and they think you are part of the cargo because they are ignorant, somebody else will snap you up and you will do well.

Let us be frank, who gets laid off in an economic slump? Obviously, the cargo. It is the same with any organisation. A corporation's main purpose is to remain in business forever. As long as it remains in business, it can provide a service. Protect those who are making a difference to the organisation and the customers. It is the duty of management, and the leader who leads the company, to protect the firm and the people who depend on it, just as it is the captain's duty to do everything in their power to keep the ship sailing.

All a person needs to do is make certain they are a vital part of their business or organisation. Nobody, especially the captain, likes to see the cargo thrown over the side, but if it helps to save the ship, there is nothing else that can be done. Dad said just go and do it; you are doing the right thing for the organisation. Always think about the customers, think about the value and the purpose, then you will make the right decision. You are making the decision not because you want to, but because you need to. If someone has made themselves the cargo, it is not your mistake. That is why people are laid off. It has nothing to do with asset management or labour relations, that is not the point. It is doing the best for everyone, since once smooth sailing has again been reached, additional employment can return when it is needed. So, each of us must decide whether we want to be part of the cargo or a member of the crew. This has really made a huge impact on my thinking.

Each of us can become such a leader in our own area of activity. It is not difficult. The leader-follower is effectively a mind game and if you master it, you can absolutely become successful. Dad said there are only a few ways for an individual to connect with another

individual. If you think about history, Mahatma Gandhi did it in one way, Napoleon Bonaparte did it in another, and dictators in various parts of the world did it differently again. But you can only achieve followers through fascination with a leader, agreement, or by shock.

The effective leader always works on agreement and they want it to be the follower's decision. An individual working with this knowledge will have no need to manipulate a person. Dad talked about manipulation; in fact, this is exactly how manipulation occurs. What the manipulator does not understand is that they are part of an orderly nature and subject to laws, so they reap what they sow. The manipulator never really wins, however much it may appear that they do. The people that take peace and honesty as their passions and work with agreement become the true leaders, just like Mahatma Gandhi.

Dad used to say that if you take a gun and end a life, that same gun will kill you. If you take a knife and think you are going to get freedom, that same knife will kill you. Action, reaction. But if you take the truth and take a nation towards development, that same truth will save you.

‘Every day,’ Dad said, ‘you form a composite with another personality, even though you may not be aware of that taking place. Everyone who generates an idea creates a composite personality with another person, who will become receptive to that person's suggestions.’ Dad said that there are simple ways you need to operate. ‘You should always operate with a certain amount of ethics,’ he said. Ask questions and listen to answers. Be direct, honest, sincere and friendly.

‘Do not ignore suggestions,’ he said, ‘because that is unfair.’ Sometimes I find it challenging when I come up with an idea and

somebody shoots me down without even taking it into consideration. But instead of becoming frustrated, I have decided it is their ignorance. I need to work on myself and increase the self-esteem of others, because by doing that perhaps I can better put across my idea.

‘Be calm,’ Dad said, ‘and be collected. And always call people by their name, because it makes a big difference,’ He used to tell me. I see that. Even our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, when facing difficult questions, always takes the time to call people by their first name.

Dad also always advised me to develop my ability to give suggestions that others will accept, and I am practising this. You must know in advance what suggestion you will give. He said, ‘Have a clear and concise suggestion in your mind and communicate your ideas verbally, in writing and in gesture. Think about your tone of voice. A suggestion must be complete in its entirety, be precise and be on message.’

‘You have also got to become a kind of sponge,’ Dad said, ‘for information that will help you on your way. This is where learning comes in.’ He always learned because he always read.

‘You do not have to waste years making the same mistakes,’ he said, ‘let others make some. You will be surprised at how quickly you will reach your goal, but do not be impatient.’ I was always impatient, and I think Mum mentioned in her book that Dad was always saying, ‘Mahan, be patient.’ As a child I was impatient to get things done quickly. Now, I get things done quickly, but I am practising being patient. I am impatient to get things done and that is not a bad thing.

Know and have faith that what should come to you will come to you at the right time. Dad always believed he would get what he wanted.

‘The laws will always do that for you,’ he said. ‘And above all, if you should forget everything else,’ he said, ‘remember that everything about you, everything you will ever have, experience, or know, operates as a result of law. The law that is true and unshakeable, the law of the stars and the suns of the world, this is the law of nature that we need to understand. As humans, we need a deep understanding of the natural laws and we need to learn the essence of a higher strength, our internal strength. Learn that everything in nature goes by law, not by luck.’

That took me a really long time to understand, but Dad always completely believed in that. When I was a child I would lose at cricket and come home devastated. Dad said would say, ‘Everything for good.’ But I just could not understand that back then.

The same thing happened throughout my life until 2006. Dad said that however hard and bad a problem is, the return will be bigger. So, as I now reflect on that in this final chapter, and back to 2006 when I lost him in an accident, at the time that was the greatest tragedy I had experienced in my life. I was devastated, I was shattered; I thought the whole world could not go on. But today, after many years, his departure has actually taught me so many lessons.

None of us are here forever. I am not here with my girls forever. But I am sharing with them some of the ideas that Dad shared with me. I do not have a book in which I can read his ideas because he did not write one, but I am fortunate that I have a great sense of gratitude and I am able to bring this book into the world as I turn 50.

I am also grateful that I bring this to the world as the world needs

it, in the midst of a pandemic. We do not know how this is going to unfold, but everyone is able to create their own economy. You can look at the news and you can look at the negatives, but I have learned from Dad, and others, that if someone comes from a negative point of view, it is best not to listen. I hear, it goes in one ear and out of the other, and then at the first available opportunity, I change the topic.

I do not flatter them, but I change the topic into a positive and talk about them in a positive way. Humans will always enjoy hearing positivity about themselves. It is not flattery, because you do not want to be in a negative space. But some people are obviously completely entrenched in negativity, so the best thing to do is not to have conversations of that sort. I have friends who, when you talk about something positive, will go onto something negative in the next five seconds. They can drag you down. But now I have learned not to communicate with them, because I cannot do anything else for them.

Look about you now, take stock of your present results and your situation, because it is nothing more or less than the results of your past actions. Are you happy? Is it what you want? When you answer these questions, you know what you must do today, tomorrow, and the next day. And in that action, rest in the calm, serene and peaceful life that will come to your palm. Then, you will reach what you want to achieve, and you will harvest what you have sown.

Dad went to the same British school in Sri Lanka that I went to, the Methodist Central College established by a missionary, Reverend William Ault, in 1814, which was the first British-established school in Sri Lanka. In 1988, when I was 18 and studying for my A-levels, we

celebrated the school's 175th anniversary. I was a proud Senior Prefect and I wrote an article in Tamil about leadership. I started that article with the words, 'If you are not going to change when you are five, you are not going to change when you are 50.' Today, 30 years after leaving that school, I think I humbly disagree with that opening statement.

My Dad was in the Old Boys' Association of the school and wrote his own article as part of those celebrations. He talked about how wonderful the Methodist missionary values were and how they had helped him. We also received a visit from the Reverend James Cartman, Principal of the school from 1938 to 1942. I had the huge privilege of meeting Rev Cartman, who was given an OBE for Education because of the work he did on the east coast of Sri Lanka.

It was my ignorance, when I was 18, to make that statement about change. I can now humbly say, 'Young Pankajan, I'm sorry, you were wrong. You can change when you are 50 or 60, as long as you are willing to change and willing to understand the laws of nature.' Dad said that and I did not appreciate it then, but I do now.

This is *The Power of Learning from DAD*.



*This book is dedicated to my  
wonderful parents, to both of whom  
I am eternally grateful.*

“To our daughters, Sharanie and Dharanie...

Whilst writing this book, I have often thought of you both. Life is, and always will be, full of challenges. The natural laws and practices in this book, whilst meaning little to you now, will, I trust, guide you as you grow into young women and make your place in the world.

Putting *The Power of Learning from DAD* together – my second book – has been a heartening experience, made all the more emotional by the fact that I am writing about your grandparents. I know that, in time, this book will mean as much to you as it does to me.”

# THOUGHTS ON

## *THE POWER OF LEARNING FROM DAD*

**Fifty words for a 50-year-young author – Dr Selva Pankaj will turn 50 on the date of publication of this book but prefers not to be known as a 50-year-old!**

**The following individuals have kindly each shared 50 words of views, thoughts and wisdom in response to *The Power of Learning from DAD*.**

“I contested the presidency of Sri Lanka in 2019, the beginning of a long journey. Selva’s book provides the motivation to stay focused on that ultimate goal. With this motivation, I hope to grace the opening of Selvanayagam Square and Selvanayagam Memorial Hall in Batticaloa as President of Sri Lanka.”

**Dr. Rohan Pallewatta, Sri Lankan Presidential Candidate 2019**

“This book is unique and important, dealing with every aspect of daily life. I particularly liked Chapter 15 on Wisdom. I feel that I know ‘Dad’ better than many as I was given the pleasurable task of sculpting a 3D bronze statue of him, spending many hours studying old pictures.”

**Prof Nadey Hakim, GCStJ MD PhD Hon.D. Arts FRCS(Eng)  
Hon FRCS Glasgow Hon FICS FACS; President’s Envoy,  
Imperial College; Vice President British Red Cross, London**

“A disarming and highly personal account of learning, by turns an uplifting manifesto of values and a celebration of father-son relationships. It encourages us to reflect on what we have secured from our own parents in terms of knowledge and attitude, and to embrace the idea of autobiography as pedagogy.”

**Professor Patrick McGhee, Assistant Vice Chancellor,  
University of Bolton**

“There are many moments when I think about my own father. Selva’s book charts a personal journey which we all have trodden in our lives. I am fortunate to still be able to walk in his shoes as we both share the same size. I listen to Daddy by Coldplay”.

**Ronel Lehmann, Chief Executive, Finito Education Limited**

“This skilfully-entitled book is written not only from experience but from the heart. Dr Pankaj writes with conviction in a creative narrative that brings words of wisdom from his late father to bear upon today’s world. The words flow and the ideas inspire the reader; I couldn’t put it down.”

**Reverend Canon Professor Peter S Neil, Vice-Chancellor,  
Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln, UK**

“Selva beautifully captures, in this very human exposé, timeless lessons for posterity. Beginning from the benefits of education, to the value of boldness and hard work, struggle and sacrifice, Selva weaves a powerful thread in defining success with immense humility, respect for the soul and recognition that family is everything!”

**Mohamed Amersi, Global Communications Entrepreneur,  
Philanthropist and Thought Leader**

“Of everything the ancient philosophers thought important, first and foremost was being a good parent. It’s a choice and something you must be intentional about, requiring the four stoic virtues of courage, temperance, justice and wisdom. This is a wonderful treatise on integrating these virtues as a means of self-mastery.”

**Blaine Bartlett, Author of the #1 international bestseller  
Compassionate Capitalism: A Journey to the Soul  
of Business**

“As someone whose life has also been shaped within a family business and has been intelligently and generously mentored by a much-loved father and other members of my family, I was incredibly interested to read Selva’s insights. All business started as family businesses. This is an inspiring and uplifting read.”

**Dr Maurizio Bragagni MBA, CEO, Tratos**

“As someone who came to this country with very little, Selva epitomises the innovation and entrepreneurship we need. Now, more than ever, it will be the creative thinkers that will tackle the problems of society. Selva’s book is testament to all who come to the UK and contribute so much.”

**Dr Richard Knapp, Head of Regent Research Centre**

“An inspirational text combining the author’s natural humility and talent in a way that draws the reader into self-reflection. The importance of nature and nurture is also beautifully highlighted. As Selva allows one to accompany him on his remarkable life ‘journey’, one has a privileged insight into what shapes success.”

**Professor G E Holmes DL, President & Vice Chancellor,  
The University of Bolton**

“This book emphasises the role of parental wisdom as a child matures instilling a lifelong system of values. Having lost my father when young, I am deeply grateful that my mother took this task to heart. I’d not be where I am today without her. For me, nurture reigns supreme.”

**Lord Rami Ranger CBE, House of Lords**

“What a beautiful and insightful book! Dr. Pankaj shares the timeless wisdom of his late father and intertwines his learnings at Harvard with insights from some of the world’s greatest teachers in personal transformation. His compelling journey provides lessons we can all apply for a richer and more rewarding life.”

**Cynthia Kersey, Author, CEO & Founder, Unstoppable Foundation**

“As Selva has drafted this book I have seen the joy it has brought him, immersed in precious memories of his father in years past. We have been reminded just how much he gave us. The chapter on Friends resonated with me deeply. I hope it speaks to you too.”

**Tharshiny Pankaj, Managing Director, Regent Group**

“Memoir, self-reflection and theoretical exposition, this book is a palimpsest, charting the journey of Dr Selva Pankaj, from leaving Sri Lanka as a result of civil war, with limited resources, to building a successful, agile and fast-growing international business, Regent Group. He did this by applying life lessons from D.A.D.”

**Akosua Bonsu, Director of Studies, *Thinking into Character*,  
Regent College London**

“A wonderful book in which Selva masterfully combines beautiful insights into his upbringing with the teachings of some of the world’s greatest thinkers on human potential. It has been fantastic to create this book ‘remotely’ during the Covid-19 lockdown, absorbing Selva’s father’s wisdom at an interesting time of unprecedented challenge.”

**Claire Coe, writer**



## ABOUT REGENT GROUP

[www.regentgroup.org.uk](http://www.regentgroup.org.uk)

**Regent Group** is a London-based organisation specialising in higher education but also active in the fields of independent schooling, real estate management and educational technology.

The business was established as a small tutorial college in 2000 by Selva, Selvam, and Tharshiny. After significant expansion and diversification over the years, the organisation now employs circa 200 staff working at sites across the capital as well as staff working virtually from offices both within and outside of the UK.

Regent Group aims to provide autonomy and choice to consumers facilitated by disruptive innovation and holds dear its long-term motto – “The end result of education is character.”





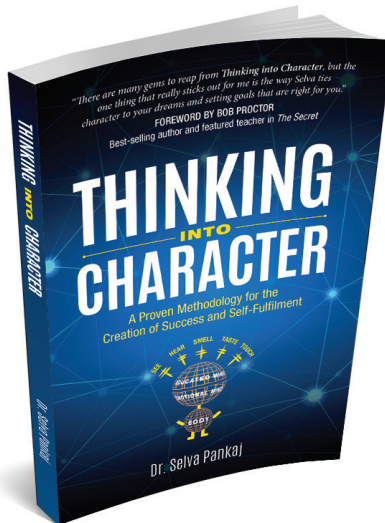


Also by Dr. Selva Pankaj

---

# THINKING — INTO — CHARACTER

A Proven Methodology for the  
Creation of Success and Self-Fulfilment



This book plants the seed for inside-out education and revolutionises the understanding of the DNA of the success formula. Thinking into Character represents a dynamic learning culture.

# DESIRE | ATTITUDE | DECISION

While studying at Harvard Business School in 2016, Dr. Selva Pankaj was introduced to Professor Clayton M. Christensen, who talked to him about the laws of nature and the need to do certain things in a certain way, every day, in order to achieve success.

These words evoked memories of the lessons that Selva had first been taught by his late father, growing up in war-torn Sri Lanka and then later building his success in the United Kingdom.

This book is part memoir, part self-reflection and part theoretical exposition. It warmly combines paternal wisdom with the teachings of many eminent authors on human potential, human behaviour and success, creating a seminal work on harnessing the powers we have within us to achieve our goals, and the power of learning from our parents.



Dr. Selva Pankaj created Regent Group, an education and investment organisation, with his wife and late father in 2000. The Group has since enjoyed dramatic growth and diversification. Selva has a passion for learning about human potential and human behaviour. He identifies Professor Clayton Christensen, Bob Proctor, Napoleon Hill and Andrew Carnegie among his inspirations, though no one inspired him so much as his father, who first taught him about the power of the laws of nature.

[www.tic.uk.com](http://www.tic.uk.com)

[www.selvapankaj.com](http://www.selvapankaj.com)

Published by Regent Publishing  
Regent Hill House, 153 Great Titchfield Street  
Fitzrovia, London, W1W 5BD, United Kingdom

GBP 10 EUR 13 USD 15 CAD 18

ISBN 978-1-5272-388-5-5



9 781527 238855 >