

CHAPTER 11

INFLUENCE

When 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.