

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.