

Category: Self help/Self improvement



### Making Your Future in Your World

You will find true happiness and fulfillment when you shape your life according to your vision and dreams. If you allow others to interfere in this space, your spirit will cry and you will be in pain.

You can make a difference, large or small. You have the power to do it. You are not a small part in a big machine. You are a very significant player in this game of life. Everything on this planet and in your immediate environment is there to stimulate your thinking. The more aware you become of yourself, others and your environment, the more effective you will become in every dimension of your life - personal, professional and social.

You don't have to work. Your body and mind will do it for you!

*Reinvent Yourself* shows you how.

### About the Author

Kamran Rizvi has made a unique place for himself in the history of a young nation straddled with a burgeoning population of over 170 million people, by pioneering the self-improvement and organizational development movement in 1991. His writings, workshops, seminars and speaking engagements in conferences and other fora, inspire. Kamran's teams at Navitus, SoL & Stimulus have directly and indirectly, positively impacted the lives of millions throughout Pakistan. A flourishing learning and development industry has taken root making education and success an unstoppable agenda for change. Kamran authored his first book, titled: Go For It! which was launched at YLC 2010, and is available in pdf on home page of [www.kzr.co](http://www.kzr.co). In this website's 'Network' page, you will also find links to organizations it has spawned in the last two decades, and also those it is associated with.

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Kamran Rizvi

REINVENT YOURSELF

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Kamran Rizvi

REINVENT  
YOURSELF

*The future is not what it was*



# **REINVENT YOURSELF**

*The future is not what it was*

**Kamran Rizvi**

 [kzr.co](http://kzr.co)

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*This book is dedicated to the thousands of young leaders I have met in conferences, seminars and workshops in recent years. I salute these students of life who have decided, individually and collectively, to step out of mediocrity and claim their life for what it is – majestic and inspiring.*

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## Acknowledgements

Nothing is more pleasing to the eye than the sight of people pursuing their goal with passion and succeeding in their endeavors. My thanks go out to all those corporate sponsors, supporters and philanthropists who consciously fund learning and development initiatives throughout the land. They share with us a deep-rooted belief in the latent potential in people and what they can achieve when they become more aware of themselves, others and their environment.

It is because of these countless generous souls who share their wisdom and resources freely that at last we are beginning to see many more individuals – young and old – taking greater responsibility for their lives by searching for answers to their problems.

001

A growing number of people are turning their personal struggles into challenges and are meeting them head on. Their passion to confront the issues and make a difference points the way to a very different and a dramatically better future for us all. I salute these students of life who have decided, individually and collectively, to step out of mediocrity and claim their lives for what it is – majestic and inspiring.

My heartfelt thanks to Shireen Naqvi who always goes out of her way to read the drafts I produce. She unfailingly gives me valuable feedback and suggestions. Her caring leadership in steering and nurturing the youth movement in Pakistan's urban and rural areas is exemplary. In her words, "We want to bring a revolution of peace and love in the country, not a revolution of war and bloodshed." A big thanks to

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Sarmad Tariq who has been instrumental in provoking ideas out of me and capturing them in a form that can go to print. I owe immense gratitude to Amann Omar, my niece, who was only 16, when she volunteered to transcribe hours of recordings.

Several of my other colleagues at Navitus, SoL, Stimulus and those in other organizations I am associated with, have always been there for me in my hour of need. They continue to encourage me to write so that I could reach out to a wider audience. I remain forever indebted to them for their vision and commitment which is expanding and strengthening our cause of developing the human factor far and wide.

002 Three young people have joined hands with me yet again to ensure that this second, of hopefully many books, lands in your hands, as it has now. Maryam Ahmad and Syed Nazim, presently studying at Lahore University of Management Science (LUMS), extended their wholehearted support in making this project a success. Maryam is an ace at editing, while Nazim added his creative flair through the visuals that say it all. I am also grateful to Emran Baluch, our creative guru at Navitus, for beautifully capturing the books' concept in the cover design you see, and in getting the manuscript to print.

Last, but not least, I remain indebted to my family and friends whose continuing guidance, support and understanding frees me to work with my team in pursuit of our grand vision and a challenging mission.

Kamran Rizvi  
Islamabad, May 16, 2011

## Preface

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The future is not what it was. What you saw when you peered into your future a year ago, is not necessarily valid anymore. You have changed. Your world has changed. Future never was and would not ever be mere extrapolation of present flow of life.

The possibilities you saw for yourself in the past were seen through a 'lens' (a set of assumptions, shaped by your beliefs) that may have been unhelpful.

If your 'lens' were blurry or discolored in the past, you can see now how easily you could have had a distorted view of the future. That



003 lens may have formed the basis of decisions you made, which means that they were not necessarily based on a balanced interpretation of the context or the flux in which you lived. For instance, many in Pakistan today look at the country's economic, political and social conditions with a hazy lens. All they see is a picture full of threats, destruction, decline and decay. This dim view of the state of affairs is leading a large number of our youth with the means, to plan their exit from the country. They are spending time and money to migrate to places like Canada, Australia etc.

A clear lens would help you see that where there are threats, there are an equal number of opportunities. Destruction forces construction, and decay and decline lead to rebuilding. Considering both, with a good sense of your strengths and weaknesses, with a calm mind,

would help you arrive at a better decision – your decision of whether to continue living in Pakistan or emigrating to a foreign land would be based on sound reasoning. Why is this necessary? Because running away from trouble will never keep you away from it. Instead, you should aim to intelligently move towards what you truly desire and overcome the odds with your creative efforts.

Not only has our inner world changed, but our outer world also changes and continues to reshape itself at a maddening pace. Unless we consciously keep pace with the changes within us and around us, we will miss opportunities that keep coming our way and we may even fall victim to threats that never crossed our mind.

004 Who could have imagined that Japan would be shaken so terribly in just a few minutes?! It is one of the world's leading economies! Much was destroyed, but Japanese national spirit to rebuild and not waste time lamenting came promptly to surface. Look at the grace and dignity with which they are rebuilding their nation after the recent tsunami of unprecedented scale.



Would you ever, in your wildest imaginings, have foreseen the uprisings we have witnessed in the Middle East and North Africa? Countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya and so many others are experiencing a series of convulsive changes? What does all this mean to you and your future possibilities?

None of us are ever immune to what happens in our environment. We live in an increasingly interdependent world. This fact adds to the complexities in our lives. We get overwhelmed. However, it is only in adverse and threatening conditions that our mind performs at its best by becoming more creative and innovative.

These are exciting and equally terrifying times. What awareness, knowledge and skills do we need to help us survive and thrive in such times? Do we have a paradigm that helps us interpret our realities in insightful, analytical and constructive ways?

The first thing is for us to re-discover who we are. Redefine yourself to make the most of the opportunities that surround you. Protect and fortify your dreams more towards achieving it, ensuring it goes from strength to strength in your being.

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Our cry for freedom would be hollow, if it is not supported by discipline and self-restraint. Yet, excessive caution can paralyze us. This is an amazing contradiction which, when seen in its true light, is a blessing.

Contradictions trigger questions in our mind and force us to think creatively – but only when we are mindful and aware of our own potential and possess a positive attitude.

In my travels to South Asia, Far East, Middle East, Europe and North America, I come across people of different nationalities and divergent



cultures, many of whom hold different views from mine. Learning about their unique paradigm is enriching and at times eye-opening. No two human beings are alike – As unique individuals we have different pasts; we come from different cultures and traditions; we are different in terms of our race and ethnicity and each one of us experiences life in distinctively different ways. In fact, even siblings, born in the same economic and social circumstances, of the same parents, have different aptitudes, attitudes and display different attributes.

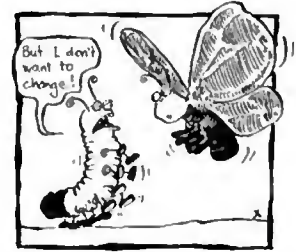
006 Despite differences of nationality, culture, ethnicity, language or color, we share a common humanity. We are all alike at a deeper level. For example, we all cry and laugh based on a variety of external stimuli; we get angry and confused on occasions; we all experience sadness and joy from time to time; and we all fall ill once in a while; we win and we lose in games and arguments; we succeed and we fail at whatever we attempt; we get excited and feel depressed with results we author; yet we all dream of a better tomorrow.

To me success means having and enjoying health, respect and happiness in life. The reward of such success is peace of mind, which comes from a sense of freedom you enjoy, and the responsibility you exercise, each day. Success is a never ending journey, and for successful people, goals serve as milestones in the journey of life.

Successful people are focused on their potential, their dream, their attitude and their relationships. They make their own luck. They love problems. They believe that

problems are their opportunity and challenge. They search for bigger problems and challenges to overcome. They use environmental resistance as an aid to fly even higher. For them, there is no such thing as an effortless life.

Self-change is the key to self-improvement. But change in itself is a painful process. Face it and stay committed till the end. The resulting freedom and peace of mind is going to be your reward.



When will you start to 'fly'? How about now? Do what you have always wanted to do, believing that you can get what you want without breaking the hearts of those you love. 007



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### Introduction

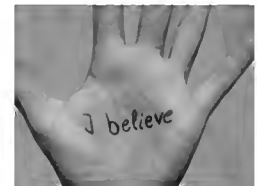
In reinventing yourself, never underestimate the power of your beliefs. You will only see what you believe. For example, different people react to the sight of a snake in a variety of ways. Some scream and run. Others freeze. There are also those who will wait, think and plan. They'll manage to swiftly catch it by its neck or tail and playfully place it in a cage as a collection. Whether you believe you can do something, or you can't... rest assured, you are right!

Whatever you believe in has a tendency of coming true, giving you the opportunity to say gleefully, “See! I told you so!” For instance, if you believe you cannot improve upon your grades in college, or succeed in a business venture as an entrepreneur, don't be surprised when what you believe in, materializes!

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What sets people apart are essentially their beliefs about life and possibilities. Some 'drift' through life, while others install beliefs that help them soar in the sky of possibilities? I hope you are in the latter category, or are at least keen enough to change yourself for your own good.

This is as good a time as any to ask yourself, why you believe what you believe. Are your beliefs helping you in any way? What evidence do you have to support your current beliefs?



I often ask participants in my workshops, "What do birds do that we don't?" Their usual, and spontaneous,



## Reinvent Yourself

reply is, "They fly!" Think about it. Do birds really fly? Or do they merely flap their wings i.e., make the effort? Birds only flap their wings and nature makes them fly. Clip a few feathers from the wings of a pigeon and it will lose its freedom and ability to fly, because we have interfered with the laws of nature; the laws of aerodynamics. We can learn important lessons from this and other examples from our own lives.

Confront reality. Self deception will only make matters worse for you in the long run. If you feel your 'wings' are clipped and you find yourself stuck in a rut, ask yourself why and how your life got to be this way. For meaningful answers, you need to look at your past. Go back to your earliest recollections from your childhood.

010 Imagine as though you are rewinding your home video. What can you see, feel and hear? Perhaps you hear your parents, friends, teachers or relatives saying: "You can't do this," "Now this was stupid of you," "You will never learn," "These lofty dreams are not for ordinary mortals like you."

You may also hear them say: "You are very intelligent," "You are destined to do great things," "I love your ambitious nature." These are just a few examples of inputs, negative or positive; we have received from our environment. Most parents, relatives, friends and teachers are well meaning. But they do not know that in their desire to help us, they sometimes inadvertently clip our 'wings'.



## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

Our beliefs serve as our 'wings'. Disempowering beliefs are equivalent to having our wings clipped. Look at your relationships at work, at home and in society. See the problems you face. Analyze them. It should not surprise you to find that what you believe about life, people and problems, manifest in everything that you experience. I have yet to come across a person whose beliefs do not match the reality they uniquely experience – good or bad!

Our beliefs are formed in our childhood. If we remain unaware of them, they turn into realities we experience. Review all your beliefs. Helpful beliefs will keep you on track. You will remain responsible for your actions and will be more likely to build a kind of life you desire. If you are suffering from self doubt and fear of the unknown... it's okay. It simply shows you that you are human and fallible. But now that you are becoming more aware of yourself, you will be able to recognize and change your beliefs, and consequently your perceptions that are harming your self-interest.

Why is it that so many people are found struggling at the bottom of the heap? There are several possible reasons. Some have resigned themselves to their present condition, believing that this is just the way they were destined to be. Others are frustrated with past setbacks and blame bad luck for their misfortunes, finally quitting. Many are just not aware of the immense potential within them and exist numbly in blissful ignorance. They neither seek to know nor are they



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really interested in seeing beyond their nose. Such people spend their time making ends meet from day to day.

It is time you change yourself by moving from a life of trying to survive day-to-day, to a life of immense service and contribution.

Think of people you admire – dead or alive. Study their lives – in particular, their beliefs - closely. You will find that their beliefs about life are similar to those of other people you deem successful. For example, they all believe that life has its ups and downs. They believe that laws of nature work for them when they recognize, respect and submit to them. They take risks and are willing to lose all they have invested in order to achieve higher goals.

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Successful people value relationships and make it their business to understand human needs, which they then aim to satisfy, but only if they are relevant.



Successful people seek to influence others and at the same time remain open to alternative ideas and suggestions. They weigh suggestions from others in their head before accepting or rejecting them. They believe in the principle: "What you give is what you get." They patiently wait for rewards of their efforts. In other words, they believe in 'Karma'. They are driven by big, daring and at times seemingly audacious goals! They love life and seek to enjoy every moment of it.

Such people are found in the company of other

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successful people, much like the saying, "Birds of a feather flock together." You will never see crows playing in the company of eagles.

The best way to know your present beliefs is to look at the company which gives you most comfort - in other words - your natural surroundings. If you feel that your current circle of friends and companions are successful in terms you define - great! If not, make a change. Seek out people who are on the path you also desire. This will be painful at first, but continue to be respectful and tolerant towards those affected by your new outlook and behavior, particularly your loved ones.

Your immediate family deserve your greatest commitment, love and understanding. They may at first be disturbed when they witness and feel the changes in 013 you. If this happens, take it as a positive sign. This is proof that you are on your way to achieving your desired state of greater health, respect and happiness. Just make sure that what you are aiming for is in accord with God's Will.

You will inevitably come across people who are acting as spectators, merely commenting on matters about which they can do nothing directly. In general, such people see themselves as helpless victims, surrendering to circumstance or chance. If you find someone close to you in such a state of mind, try to understand them by entering their world and seeing things from their eyes.

Don't ever try to change people. They will change themselves only when they see benefit in your suggestion. People in general detest unsolicited advice.

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Hence, choose to listen to those whom you wish to help by asking questions that will serve to gently re-direct their thinking. When you listen and empathize, you will find that people will most probably begin to see the fallacy of their approach to life.

There are examples of individuals who are in love with life. They are turned on by its potential, and wake up each morning with a burning desire to make things happen. They make each day count and enjoy life to the full. They act as though each day were their last.



014 Unfortunately there are many who while away their days by living as though their 'wings' were clipped... They struggle to make ends meet, resort to blaming others for their misfortunes, and are under pressure at every turn. Huffing and puffing and getting nowhere. No one ever wants to be a victim. This only happens to people who are not exposed to the process of self-discovery. You and I would have suffered a similar fate if we were born in their circumstances and had experienced in life what they did.



## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

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### Reinvent Yourself

Hopefully, by now, you have taken stock of your current beliefs and your present reality. Knowing where you are is an important step in the journey of self-



development. The next important thing is to have clear picture of where you want to be – your vision. Once you are aware of your current and desired state, you will know the gap which you need to bridge.

Our proverbial flight comes from our mind. When we use our imagination to invent the future, we acquire miraculous powers, but only when our imagination is backed with sincerity and sense of responsibility. Our imagination also needs to include others; our stakeholders e.g. siblings, spouse, parents, teachers, friends, colleagues etc. Without their understanding and support you are not likely to make it.

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To reinvent yourself, you need to install a set of beliefs that will work for you. For this you need have affirmations – affirmations are phrases you say to yourself, repeatedly, till they become a part of your very nature. The following affirmations will at first appear like a lie to you. But the more often you repeat them, the truer they'll become. Once your mind gets the direction it needs, it works out the rest of the journey for you - from here to your desired destination. InshaAllah, you will start getting ideas of what steps to take and what decisions to make on the way to your goal!

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Given below are ten beliefs. Consider each belief in turn. Assign a number between 0 and 10 to each. (0 = least true of me; to 10 = very true of me).

1. "I can learn whatever I need to know"
2. "I am God's best creation, just like everyone else living on this planet"
3. "What I sincerely desire, visualize and share with my loved ones, I have the power to bring into reality"
4. "I am rich. I am alive. I can think, feel and act. I have all the resources I need to make a difference in my life"
5. "I have the internal discipline to stay committed to the goal/s I set for myself"
6. "Nothing is impossible, provided I allow sufficient time to make it possible"
7. "Nature is abundant and is always pregnant with possibilities"
8. "My confidence comes from being honest in all my dealings i.e., sharing what I know and declaring what I don't, when required"
9. "There is no bad news in my life, other than the one I create through my own ignorance."
10. "People see me as I see myself."

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## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

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If you have scored a 10 in all of the abovementioned beliefs it means you have attained 100%. Congratulations! However, if your overall percentage score is 80% or less, then this book may help you to attain a higher score.

In my view, beliefs of the kind mentioned here need to be installed and affirmed, repeatedly, for them to take root in our personality. In this lies the key to reinventing yourself.



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### Become A Lifelong Learner

#### Affirmation 1. "I can learn whatever I need to know"

If I want to teach you something, and you don't want to learn... You won't! You have the power not to! Equally, if I don't want to teach you, you can still learn from somewhere else. No one can stop you from learning. No one can stop you from growing. You have the power to learn whatever you want, whenever you want... The world of learning is always open to you.

You can learn from books, from the mistakes you make, from other people's experiences, from courses you take in colleges and vocational training institutes and  
018 from observing nature in all its majesty.



### Be Who You Are

#### Affirmation 2. "I am God's best creation, just like everyone else living on this planet"

Whether you believe in God or not, think about it, you are the centre of the universe. You are alive, so everything around you is.

Your presence, anywhere, impacts your immediate environment. You yawn in a crowded bus, and others follow suit. You greet someone with a smile and you spread happiness around you.

You may be confined in a limited body, but just fathom your ability to imagine and create larger than life realities.

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## Reinvent Yourself

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### Use Your Power To Visualize

**Affirmation 3. “What I sincerely desire, visualize and share with my loved ones, I have the power to bring into reality”**

It is astonishing how, when you genuinely want to accomplish something you dream of, magical powers come to your aid. For example, ideas start flowing in your head. You come across people who just happen to fit into the scheme of things. You find just the book you need while browsing in a bookshop. You end up seeing a movie that serves to inspire you.



In order to attract resources into your life, stay tuned into your vision – an attractive picture of where you see yourself in the future. Vision is about seeing success before it arrives. Keep sharpening the image in your mind. Add details like the colors, scale and other details that engage your five senses. For example, if you see yourself meeting a person with whom you need to negotiate a deal... imagine yourself greeting him with confidence and engaging him in a dialogue. See yourself dealing with his questions and objections effectively and finally see a nod of agreement and smile on his face, meaning you have arrived at a mutually rewarding agreement. The more you do this, the better you will perform in your actual meeting.

Your mind is an amazing gift of nature. What you imagine doing in the future, your subconscious mind

## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

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registers it as though it has actually happened! Therefore, the more you rehearse an event in your mind, the better you get at it. Practice is the key. And this kind of practice you can do sitting in the comfort of your living room, your study or while gently strolling in the park.



Of course, there are no guarantees of what result you will finally achieve, but such mental rehearsals will improve the probability of success.

The more you visualize scenes of you succeeding in different situations, the greater will be the likelihood of you accomplishing what you desire. It's just like net practice in cricket.



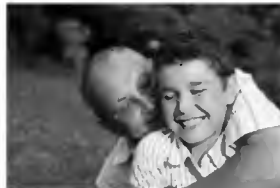
### You Have What It Takes

**Affirmation 4. “I am alive. I can think, feel and act. I am rich. I have all the resources I need to make a difference in my life”**

Gratitude is appreciation and thankfulness for everything you have ever received. Through gratitude, we acknowledge all the blessings we have – blessings we normally take for granted. The more grateful you are the richer you will feel.

Back in 1986, while I was working in a bank in London, a senior colleague of mine, during a lunch break, got me to do a short exercise. He asked me to place a few blank sheets of paper before me and list all the blessings I was enjoying. His request felt strange at first. I laughed and then I got fully engrossed in the process. I started writing: health, job, family, friends, car, prospects, home, children, wife, ability to think, ability to see, to hear, to smell, to touch, to speak, to decide, and as I continued, I found myself going deeper into my thoughts, realizing that there is so much that I am blessed with that I cannot even begin to describe. My knowledge was limited, but the blessings weren't!

Try doing this exercise... for at least fifteen minutes and you will begin to realize how rich you really are.



When you get up from your chair to fetch a cup of tea, don't forget that there are quadriplegics amongst us... those who are paralyzed shoulder down. What is a simple act for the fully

endowed, for a quadriplegic, is a huge task! Yet, I know of one, Sarmad Tariq, who always wears a smile and lives his life admirably, despite suffering from severe limitations, not just in mobility, but in carrying out routine activities of daily life. An accident in his teens had left him severely handicapped. He decided to develop his mental faculties to replace his physical limitations. You never feel sorry for him. Instead, he makes you feel how rich you are to be blessed with all your faculties – free to do whatever you desire independently and with others. Sarmad believes he doesn't suffer from disabilities... he calls himself differently-abled... that's how he puts it. He has participated in the Lahore and New York City marathons!



I had the unique fortune of working with Sarmad for four years. I found him to be a reliable performer, always on time and delivering assignments by agreed deadlines. His life story continues to inspire thousands in Pakistan and abroad.

The worst disability is having a negative mental attitude... It stems from ingratitude and ignorance.

Poverty of the worst kind is when we deny ourselves choices we can make to better our lives and of those we care for.



### A journey of self discovery

What lies behind your eyes and between your ears? Yes! Your brain - and it is called your mind when it functions!



“AAA” is a tool that helps you to make use of your mind. This is where your power to create and your infinite potential resides.

“AAA” stands for your Attributes; your Attitude; and your Aptitude. Awareness of your “AAA” furnishes you with confidence.

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As you become more aware of your 'AAA' you will also become equally aware of the 'AAA' of others. By this method you will be in a better position to leverage the 'AAA' of others in order to not only achieve your dreams but also help others achieve theirs.

The good news is that all human beings are aligned when it comes to aspirations. For example, most of us want to live in a just, prosperous and a fair world. This fact enables us to share each others' dreams with a sense of community and pursue a common goal, as a team. The problem arises when we get into the 'how' and 'why' of achieving the dream we all subscribe to. This is where awareness of our “AAA” can come in handy.



### Attributes

You know you have attributes that helped you to get to where you are today. How many attributes do you use to accomplish your daily tasks?

If you have never counted them, then keep in mind: What you don't count, does not count! What you don't measure, you cannot manage. How can you manage others if you have barely learned to manage yourself?

List your top ten attributes and then rate each one on a scale of 0-10 (0=poor to 10=very good). Examples: Thinking, decision making, writing, caring, patience, confidence, creativity, patience etc.

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10.



## Reinvent Yourself

Your attributes are your strengths if they are in balance. An attribute out of balance is a weakness. For example, over-confidence and under-confidence are a weakness, whereas confidence is your strength.



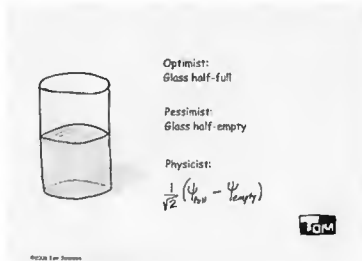
### Attitude

Some see a glass as half empty, while others see it as half full. Both are right.

026 Which perspective will serve you better?

Our attitude shapes the way we view our world and how we interpret our own experiences. There are people who have a very negative attitude to life. They have a deep sense of having been wronged and are therefore full of hate. Such pent up emotions, when expressed, can lead to destructive ends. On the other hand, there are those who see setbacks as stepping stones.

Just look at the world around you. What you mostly hear is painful – earth quakes, tsunamis, death and destruction, violent crime, extreme poverty, injustices etc. By ignoring what is happening around us can be detrimental for everyone. Such events can lead some people to depression, a sense of hopelessness and may even fuel their rage, which can lead to violent acts of revenge and destruction.



## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

The same disturbing data inspires those who have a positive attitude to life. They feel deep concern and are motivated to making a positive difference in some way. They start by initiating changes within themselves and in their immediate environment. They set goals; acquire the knowledge and skills needed to tackle a particular problem; they network with people in their circle of influence; they form support groups. In short, they use their energies in constructive ways.

Swinging to the negative is undoubtedly the easy way. It's far easier to drift than to drive, fall than to climb. Running away from a challenge is our natural instinct, because there is always a way out. Human beings are essentially pain avoiders and pleasure seekers.

It is only when you change your perception that you change your reality.

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Every problem has a solution. Hell is the only place where there are no solutions! Just because you don't see it, it doesn't mean the solution doesn't exist. Our perception is shaped by our attitude. When we stop seeing possibilities, it means we have shut our minds. A remark like, 'I have tried everything, and nothing works' stems from a conceptual block.



What makes our attitude negative? Environmental influences on us since our childhood. Therefore, I do not blame any soul who has a negative attitude; neither do I feel anger towards anyone who is self-destructive.

## Reinvent Yourself

All we can do is to show compassion which comes from a deep understanding of the other. Only by introducing new and positive experiences to people in pain can we help them break out of a negative frame of mind.

The biggest price anyone pays is to take his own life. Imagine how it would be if you could make your own life!! That's being positive. Not only making your life, but also helping others make their lives better. Your life can inspire others!



028 Socrates asked fundamental questions of human existence. What makes us happy? What makes us good? What is virtue? What is love? What is fear? How should we best live our lives? It seems as though Socrates foresaw the problems of our modern world. I wonder what he would have to say about how we live today.

## Aptitude

Now let's talk about aptitude. It's about deciding what you should be doing with your life. Do we pursue a career or a direction in life on the basis of what is in vogue - what our society considers acceptable, or do we follow our inner voice?

We all have an inclination towards doing things we were meant to do from



## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

the time we came to this planet. Our search has to be just this: Finding out what we enjoy doing - doing what engages our heart and soul.

Cover this journey of discovery by trying your hands at different things, particularly in your early years. This kind of experimentation needs to be encouraged, before we gradually narrow down to a particular discipline. Dabbling in the intellectual and emotional world of the arts and the sciences, and also engaging in physical activities is important. It is through having a wide exposure that you will find what clicks with your inner being.

Finding your inner voice is the most liberating discovery you will ever make in your life. This can happen early in life, but some spend years before they find their calling 029 in life! Do not ever despair.

The key is to keep searching till you find what clicks with you. While your search continues, nothing stops you from fulfilling your responsibilities to yourself and to your loved ones by earning and adding value where you work, whether it's a job or your own business. This is how you put your life on track, a track of your choosing.

جو انوں کو مری نہ سحر ہے  
پہر ان میں ہندوئی دل دہر ہے  
عزایا آرزو میری یہی ہے  
را نور بعیت عام کر دے!  
قریب

Beethoven with his music, Edison with his inventions, Allama Iqbal with his inspiring poetry are all examples of people who found their inner voice and achieved great heights. When people find their inner voice, they

## Reinvent Yourself

excel. Others just squander their life. What's the point of working in a place when our heart is not in it? When we enjoy our work, the quality we



produce is at another level entirely. Many people just work to pay bills and taxes, and meet other obligations. How many of us are truly pursuing our dream?

The day you love what you do, you won't have to work a day in your life - or at least it won't seem like it! That's aptitude for you!

030 Attitude helps you pursue excellence; your aptitude helps you choose your field in which you will thrive; and your attributes will help you do what is needed to get there.

Through a process of reflection and self analysis you can discover your 'AAA', and also find the rest of your infinite resources, to make the necessary changes in the way you think, perceive and behave.

Know who you are. Nothing is more important. Self knowledge is a lifelong quest. Your understanding of yourself will expand with the passage of time. The extent to which you know yourself, you will begin to know others. And once you realize this, you will come alive to opportunities and resources within and around you.

You can think, feel and act. You are rich. You have all the resources you need to make a difference in your

## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

### Build Self-Discipline

**Affirmation 5. "I have the internal discipline to stay committed to the goal/s I set for myself"**

Start by being on time in everything you do. Turn up at weddings on time! Enjoy greeting the hosts 😊

We are free only to the extent that we are self-disciplined. The more self-control we exercise in our life, the more freedom we will enjoy. This is the law of nature. People who end up in jail are those who were extremely undisciplined in their conduct. Nature has its ways... it will either discipline you, or will let you be, but only if you are self-disciplined.

Some people can be very moody and behave 031 inappropriately in a given situation. As a result, they are unable to manage their family, social or work relationships. They end up failing in life, because they lacked the tact and the ability to adapt their behaviors to different people and situations. You will often find such people blaming their luck or others for their misfortune, instead of looking within themselves and learning from their mistakes.

To err is human. This is fine. And it is great if you recognize the error of your ways and make amends before it is pointed out to you.

Discipline simply means living by an agreed set of principles or norms.



Protect your rights while equally respecting the rights of others.



**Embrace Possibility Thinking**

**Affirmation 6. “Nothing is impossible, provided I allow sufficient time to make it possible”**

Just because you don't have a solution to a problem, doesn't give you the right to label the problem 'impossible'.

Everything we take for granted today was once considered impossible. For example, man's adventure into space, genetic engineering, telecommunications, cure for AIDS and so much else.

In future, when you are asked to do something, no matter how difficult it sounds, make it a habit of saying “Yes', I'll look into it.” If the deadline is close, and

you don't have a solution readily to mind, then ask: “Can you show me how this can be achieved in the timeframe you have given?” Of course, if you had loads of free time, you could always learn the skill or find a collaborator, who would help you get the job done.



**QUESTION:** What about when you give it your best but are unable to achieve? What about fate?

**ANSWER:** Outcomes are in the hands of Allah. And this is fate.

In my view, our fate is not static, but dynamic. This simply means that whatever we achieve in terms of quality and quantity, or fail to attain, it is pre-destined. All we can do is to make intelligent efforts.

If we pursue goals that are in accord with the higher laws, we will be comforted by the fact that whatever the outcome, it is ok. Allah knows best. However, this does not mean that we give up on our goal, if we fail to make it the first time. We must stay committed to our goal, while trying different ways to achieving it.

In other words, carve your goals in stone (commitment), and your plans in sand (flexibility).

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### Live A Life Of Abundance

**Affirmation 7. “Nature is abundant and is always pregnant with possibilities”**

There are more than sufficient resources in the world to feed everyone and provide the entire global population with clean drinking water, better sanitation, healthcare, education and other basics of life.

The fact that more than half the world is living in squalor is due to inequities and injustices that prevail in our world. The rich are getting richer and the poor, poorer. Why? Greed and hate are dividing humanity into camps that are fighting each other for control over resources. This madness continues at the highest levels of governance, all over the world. While this should concern us, it must not make us bitter and turn us into cynics.

035

Start by focusing on what you can do with your life and what you can do for those you love. Your circle of influence will expand in time, one step at a time. You are the epicenter through which good will reverberate. The stronger you are, the further your impact will be felt. You will come up with creative ideas to improve your quality of your life and that of others, knowing that there is enough to go around.

What you are earning today only reflects what you think you can earn. Thinking and income are the two key variables. Of these two, which can you control? The answer is: Thinking!! Therefore, as you expand your thinking, your possibilities will expand in equal proportion.

Q: In Islam it is said that our life earnings (rizq) is predestined, so then how can my thinking affect my earnings?

Ans: The 'destiny' vs. 'choice' (taqdeer vs tadbir) debate is age old and continues to this day. As I see it, they are both equally true and work at the same time i.e., destiny AND choice.

Our destiny tells us two things: 1) We will die; and 2) We will have a livelihood (rizq). When we will die and how much we will earn is also pre-determined. But we don't have an answer to either – this will always remain a mystery. I believe this is because of the following reasons: Not knowing when we will die helps us to deal with procrastination.

Through this awareness we are compelled to live in the 'NOW'. We improve the quality of our daily actions and interactions by living each day as though it were our last.

We do today, what must not be carried forward to another day. E.g. tell your loved ones that you love them – now! You may not be around to say this to them tomorrow. Without further delay, forgive and forget everyone who has ever hurt you, or seek forgiveness from people you may have annoyed in the past. Do it now! You will feel lighter and happier when you go to bed at night, every night.

Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) is known to have said that when contemplating any action, act as though it may be your last. However, when planning for the future, do it as though you will never die. Therefore, document your hopes, dreams and plans. They will inspire others, even after you are gone. It is through written words and ideas that legends, who died thousands of years ago and in recent times, live to this day.

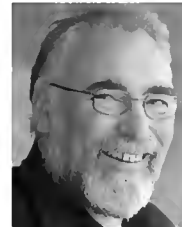
Not knowing how much we will earn helps us to be happy with what we have (fate/destiny), while causing us to strive for more in a world of abundance (choice).

Our choices will determine the ethics (right and wrong) of: 1) how we die and, 2) how much we earn. A thought we must always keep in mind is this: We spend our entire lives accumulating the very things we are willing to give up, to save our lives! What is so precious about our life? And why do we squander it mindlessly in the pursuit of worldly things that mean so little in the final analysis?

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The best place to start is with the intent of 'giving' and contributing. I here you saying, "But I can only think of giving, when I have something to give in the first place!" Your ability to give will grow as your desire to make a contribution expands. This is where ideas come to your aid.

The key to trigger creative ideas is simply to look at the myriad of problems the world is suffering from... sectarianism, poverty, injustice, poor governance, gender and racial discrimination, pandemics, water shortage, soil erosion, global warming, poor standards of education... the list goes on.



Jean-Pierre Lehmann says: "The quite phenomenal growth of the last decade notwithstanding, still roughly half of the world's population lives below the poverty line: the lower 50% possess less than 1% of the world's wealth. Over a billion people suffer from chronic malnutrition; three billion do not have access to clean water or proper sanitation. Along with poverty, inequality has risen dramatically and dangerously."<sup>1</sup>

039

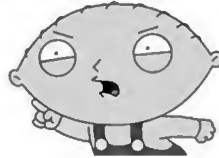
Which of these or other problems are you pained by the most? In which field would you like to contribute? By answering these kinds of questions, you will not only find a greater meaning in life, you will also find a way of making a positive difference.

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<sup>1</sup> Extracts from an email from Jean-Pierre Lehmann of The Evian Group. Dec 19, 2009

The question you may be asking yourself right now is, “Where is the money?” The good news is that there is no shortage of money. You can have as much money as your idea requires. Know this: Money flows to where it grows. There are plenty of investors and philanthropists out there. They are looking at avenues where they can put their money to good use i.e., into areas that positively impacts many lives on a sustainable basis and/or where it grows and multiplies on a continuing basis.

WHERE IS MY MONEY MAN?!!  
WHERE IS MY MONEY?!



040 You can create a vehicle (an organization – for profit or nonprofit) for the money to flow your way. However, nothing significant is ever accomplished alone. You need to have a team of competent and sincere individuals who share in your vision and are committed to a well researched and innovative idea that needs funding in order for it to come to life.



### Enjoy Confidence

**Affirmation 8: “My confidence comes from being honest in my dealings i.e., sharing what I know and declaring what I don't, when required”**

Most people believe that knowledge is the source of power. It is. The more you know about something, the more you can do. Knowledge does empower you.



But knowledge is not always your source of confidence. Something which is also true about knowledge is this: The more you know, the more you realize how little you know! Sounds strange... but this is true. Our stress comes from thinking that we need to have all the answers when going into meetings or making presentations. While preparation is the key to performing at your best, you should know that questions may be asked, where you don't have an answer... Accept this fact and be prepared for it.

041

If you are put on the spot about something you should have known about, then apologize and commit to getting back with the required information within a mutually agreed deadline. What you should avoid doing is guessing and giving baseless opinions, when a more considered thought is sought from you.

Back in 1993, I was running a workshop in Karachi for IBM managers. Keep in mind; I had only been a trainer in Pakistan for just over a year. This was my very first assignment for this well known and admired global company. After greeting the audience and introducing



myself, I threw them a challenge: “Ask me any question about IBM – from when it was founded to the present day, about anyone who has ever worked in the company, its products, markets, functions, and whatever else you can think of. If I fail to respond, I don't deserve to be here!”

There was dead silence in the room for about 15 seconds. The 25 managers were dumb struck. They all looked at me with bewilderment. They must have been wondering how I could know so much about their company. In such moments, even fifteen seconds seem like eternity. I allowed for the silence to continue for 30 seconds and then interjected: “Please ask a question... I am waiting!” After several promptings, two people, seated shoulder-to-shoulder, facing me in the U-shape setting, conferred with each other in whispers. One of them, with some trepidation asked me a seemingly tough question about an event that had taken place in the company's headquarters in 1958. I listened to his question intently and with confidence. I paraphrased what was asked. By now the room was filled with eager anticipation. I responded: “That's a good question. I am sorry, but I do not have the answer!” The suspenseful silence broke, participants jeered and the person, who posed the question, had a look of victory in his eyes. This was short-lived of course. I reminded him and the audience of the commitment I had made, which was that “If I fail to respond, I don't deserve to be here.” And I followed this up by telling them that I did respond!! What were they thinking?

How could they have believed that any man could have made such a godly claim... Even Tom Watson, the



founder of IBM, could not have dared to profess knowing absolutely everything about his own business!



### Grow In Awareness

**Affirmation 9. “There is no bad news in my life, other than the one I create through my own ignorance.”**

This may sound strange at first, but please keep an open mind. Here are some examples of what people normally consider as bad news: Death of a loved one; theft or loss of hard earned savings; getting fired from a job; falling ill; losing a limb or two in an accident; bankruptcy; marriage ending in divorce; and the list goes on...

Uncertainty is strongly associated with the future. Our fears emanate from this notion. We fear failure; we fear losing face or being laughed at; we fear repercussions that flow from making mistakes; we fear the unknown. This is understandable up to a point.



Despite what I have shared above, there is one thing in the future that is both very certain and also very uncertain, at the very same time. And that is death. This reality we ignore at our own peril.

You and I, and everyone else, will die sooner or later... in this there is no doubt. When each of us will die, remains uncertain. Why is death viewed as a morbid phenomenon... when it is quite the opposite? By focusing on our mortality, we cease to procrastinate. The very uncertainty of when we will die should be sufficient motivation for us to live each day as though it was our last. Not to do so, is ignorance at

its height!

Death comes to us all in various guises: heart failure, road accident, illness, in sleep, being shot. People die - Period. It is natural to grieve for the departed. Look at parents of the bride on the day of her *rukhsati*<sup>2</sup> – they cry. It's much the same, when your child travels abroad for higher education... a lump comes in your throat. All meetings end in partings. No matter what your age, you can never be sure of how long you will live.

Here lies an inbuilt contradiction... Plan as though you will never die, and act as though you may not be around tomorrow.

Up to this point you may have seen contradictions as a curse. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Contradictions are a blessing in disguise. They activate our mind by creating questions. This creates the hunger and thirst in us for learning and separates us from the animal kingdom. Contradictions are gifts that drive progress and prosperity. Hence, death teaches us how to live each moment to its full.

With the passage of time we become so familiar with ourselves and our surroundings that nothing amazes us anymore. Yet, if we pause to observe life carefully, we will discover miracles at work.

I had installed this belief: “There is no bad news” in April, 1994. This was tested a fortnight later. I was in a meeting with the CEO and the HR head of a

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<sup>2</sup>The ceremony signifying that the bride has left her home, to be a part of her husband's home.

## Reinvent Yourself

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multinational pharmaceutical company in Karachi. After I made my presentation to them, they asked me to wait for a few minutes in their boardroom downstairs for their decision.

I was seated comfortably, with a newspaper and a cup of freshly brewed tea by my side. Fifteen minutes later, the HR head entered the room and announced, “Kamran! I have good news and bad news for you!”

This suggestion sounded alien to me and I remained unmoved. This, I later realized, was because I no longer believed in there being such a thing as 'bad' news!

Therefore, instead of me becoming anxious, I remained calm and spontaneously uttered: “Fahim, there is no bad news in my life... so why don't you give me news 1 and news 2 instead.” My remark surprised Fahim. He

046 quickly composed himself and said, “Well Kamran, if you put it this way, then news 1 is that we'll pay you 100% of your invoice if you perform to our expectations, and news 2 is that we'll only pay 50% of invoice if your performance is below par.”

On hearing this, I smiled and suggested he had given me not only the good news, but also the very good news! By now, Fahim was totally perplexed and wondered at my audacity. I put him at ease by telling him that the very good news is that I can give him my invoice for 50% of the assignment value now, and get paid for doing nothing!! Of course, this was said in jest. It broke the ice between us and I went ahead and spoke at their conference a week later.

The point is this. My belief has



## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

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helped me remain stress-free and I also get to enjoy each moment. Worrying about things not in your control is foolishness. You don't control outcomes. Instead you control your behavior that increases the likelihood of the outcome being favorable.



## Reinvent Yourself

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### Develop Yourself

#### Affirmation 10. "People see me as I see myself"

Reinvent yourself. Remember, others see you, as you see you! For example, if you doubt your own ability to perform a certain task, others will too! On the other hand if you are positive about yourself, others will have confidence in you.

This is your chance to start describing yourself in ways that you would like others to see you as.

Trust yourself. The extent to which you have faith in your capabilities others will have faith in you in equal measure. You already have all that you seek.

048

In short, believe in yourself and others will believe in you. See how a company describes its ordinary product which is in our ever day use - red hot pepper sauce: "For well over a century, the adventurous flavor of \_\_\_\_\_ has fired up generations of thrill seekers. Its all-natural ingredients and unique aging process in white oak barrels keep \_\_\_\_\_ on the culinary cutting edge. Try it on any food for a burst of flavor that will tantalize your taste buds."



## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

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Focus on the words and phrases used:

- Adventurous
- Fired up generations thrill seekers
- Cutting edge
- Burst of flavor
- Tantalize

Have you guessed what this product is?

see page # 053

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**Script your “30 seconds elevator speech”**

Imagine that you have stepped into an elevator in a building and have pressed the button for the 20th floor. There is another person in there. He asks, “Who are you?” What will your answer be?

Instead of rambling and saying something mundane or ordinary, state your thought that grabs his attention positively, and leaves him curious to learn more about you and what you do.

To leave a lasting positive impact, you need to develop your self-concept. Prepare and rehearse it several times so that you can express who you are with finesse, when needed. Success is what happens when  
050 preparation meets with opportunity.

You will start achieving greater success when you start leaving lasting positive impressions on people you meet at work, in your social circle, and at networking events, such as conferences and seminars.

So, who are you? Decide what you will say. You need to be crystal clear and believe in what you utter. Great outcomes can be had when you speak with conviction, from your heart. By so doing, your body language and gestures, including facial expressions and voice will automatically reinforce your message.

Describe yourself in a way that demonstrates that you are indeed God's best creation. Your intent is simply to acknowledge all His blessings, and not to indulge in

megalomania<sup>3</sup> or self projection.

Through the choice of your words and the beauty of your expression, you will be Glorifying God . This is the essence of what we are meant to do through our deeds.

Cultivate your imagination by freeing yourself from inhibitions. Describe yourself below in glowing terms, in the present tense, in all honesty and sincerity to yourself. Recognize your infinite potential and the vast number of attributes within you. At first you might feel as though you are lying to yourself. This will happen because, what you are writing is in conflict with your current beliefs. Continue writing this pious lie (naik jhoot).

Your script:

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<sup>3</sup> A psychopathological condition characterized by delusional fantasies of wealth, power, or omnipotence.

## Reinvent Yourself

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Once you have written an impressively crafted 30 seconds elevator speech, read it to yourself daily, every morning you wake up, and before going to bed at night. Keep this going till it becomes your truth. This process may take a few months, but you will soon start feeling changes taking place within you.

Keep refining and improving this description over time.



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## Part 1: Flap Your Wings

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### Branding at its best.

If a product like red-hot pepper sauce can be made to sound so attractive and compelling, what is stopping you from self expression that causes the listener to say, WOW! Or SubhanAllah!



053

## Reinvent Yourself

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### Nurture A Beautiful Vision

First, change your beliefs. Then dream of a beautiful future with an unfettered mind and you will have a healthy set of 'wings' with which to 'fly'.

See yourself in your mind's eye being successful and enjoying the fruits of your labor.

Nurture a beautiful vision of yourself and your loved ones. By doing so, you will have, in a sense, sown a seed in your mind. Now let it grow in time. You have reinvented yourself!

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Your next step is to make plans and put them into action.

Flap your wings furiously and let mother-nature help you fly!



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## Part 2: Tapping the Mind

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**From 'Was' To 'Will'**

**Sarmad's story in his own words**

**He says...**

If you're expecting a tearjerker from some “poor young man trapped and languishing in the confines of a wheel chair” then I've got news for you. Go read Mills & Boons and all such heart breaks because this young man, I assure you, is anything but poor. It is my dad who is footing all my medical bills! I have a job, a car and a beautiful wife. So now that we have the basic's out of the way let me walk - sorry! Let me roll you through my life.

But first allow me a minute of digression. In the past 17  
056 years I have had a lot of time to think about many things, above all about life itself. Not that it's big deal because you would have too if like me you had spent half that time lying on your belly staring at the floor or spending two thirds of your walking time sitting on your behind. (Remember Buddha? Well, he too just sat and sat and sat – and just look at the man wow! And to think I'm just a few years away from matching his sitting-mantra). Seriously speaking when I had first injured myself and had become a cripple, God, how I still hate this word, I simply wanted to die. And that too not for any so called noble purpose of sparing trouble to my parents or family but simply for the convenience of it. Imagine the stupidity of wanting to die merely because living normally suddenly appeared to be a daunting task. But over the years I realized one thing, there is nothing more beautiful than life itself; life with its tiny insignificant joys. And I intend living it to the full. That is why I am calling this brief autobiography of mine, “From was to

will”.

There was a time when I was physically normal, then I was turned into a cripple but now I feel normal once again and Insha-Allah will become everything I ever wanted to be. And having said my piece let me now take you through the trials and tribulations of your indigenous Mr. Iron-side.

I was just fifteen and life was good, and particularly so that summer of 1991. My father was posted in Quetta at the time and so with the family stuck up there I alone had been allowed to go to Gujranwala to holiday with my cousins, the naughtiest tribe of youngsters on this side of Suez.

Life was eat-play-laugh-eat and nothing else. I had always 057 been the outdoors chap and while I may have been fuzzy about many things I surprisingly had one clear goal - to win an Olympic gold in swimming. But first I had to get into the national side and with the trials for junior national swimming team a mere two months away; this water baby was wasting no opportunity to hit the water. And boy did I really hit it that day!

The bunch of us lazily strolled through some farmland when we came across a small waterway. Anybody could have told you that it could not have been more than a couple of feet deep and no place to show off. But try telling that to a cocky fifteen year old whose swimming ego was more buoyant than a full blown tyre tube. Within seconds I was the first one to strip off my shirt and get to the edge of the waterway. Once there, I raised myself on my toes, spread out my arms in an exaggerated stance of a show diver and dived in. It was



*the last time that I would be feeling the weight of my body on my feet, but I didn't know it at that time.*

*All I know is that a searing pain ran through my entire body as my head struck the shallow base and all sensation left my body. I floated back to the surface belly down like a rag doll, my face still under water. My cousins thought it was a prank and started dunking me jokingly and I nearly died by drowning. Only after I screamed out in pain and told them to keep my face out of water did the reality sink in. It would be another few hours and what appeared like an eternity of being tossed around in the back of an army truck that I would make it to the military hospital. It would be another few days before I would be introduced to my neck vertebrae C4 & C5, which had been broken by the fall and had in turn crushed my spinal cord. I was now officially a cripple. I just didn't know it then.*

*The upside about being involved in a serious accident is that the worst passes away while the injured is either passed out or too damn hurting to care. Like I learnt later, the doctors were convinced that I wouldn't last more than a few hours and in a bid to make it less painful I was told that my ribs had been broken and I would be fine in a few days.*

*To cut the story short I was then shifted to Lahore. And what a welcoming reception I got. Two holes were drilled on either side of my head (No! that's not how I lost my brains), clamps bearing 30lbs weights were attached in an apparent bid to pull my neck back into its original position. By now my family was already on its way from Quetta and since my dad was coming as well, would you believe it that I was actually secretly glad about my*

*accident. See, I wasn't that excited about my soon to be announced academic results so I was quite happy to pay the price of a few broken ribs and skip his admonishing on the sympathy count. But by now I had started growing suspicious. If my ribs were broken then why the hell were they hanging weights that were unbearably agonizing? At times it was so bad that I could no longer hold back my tears. When the real picture was finally given to me, I cried that night as well. But these were not tears of pain, but of fear.*

*For the first time in my life I suddenly became scared of life itself. What followed were months of painful existence and a major surgery involving the removal of bone shrapnel from around the spinal cord. It took three men to move me in bed. I was totally numb below my neck. Everybody wanted me to believe otherwise but I knew what I was; a vegetable.*

*I hated my state, to put it mildly. Only weeks earlier I had been a strapping lad of six-feet three who had been reduced to a three foot something crumpled mass, destined to be tucked away in a wheel chair for the remainder of his days. Refuge came in the form of denial. I convinced myself that I would be okay in no time and there was nothing to worry about. Deep inside I must have known the pain of my parents and their anxiety about how to care for me for the rest of their lives. Trust me it's not an easy thing for many of us to understand. Here, I was, their only son who was supposed to be their support in their late years. And now, fate had turned my parents into my crutches for the rest of their lives. I didn't know it then, or maybe I was too young to want to know it, but I can imagine how my parents would have died every single day trying to make me live.*

*I may have been their only son but I was never really that close to my parents before this tragedy. I still remember being surprised seeing that immense grief in their eyes when my parents met me for the first time after the accident. Both had been trying to act very composed and matter-of-fact but the occasional quivering of lips would betray their desperate struggle to keep their pain hidden. Of course they already knew about the nature of my injuries and I didn't. Come to think of it isn't really that bad a deal getting really close to your parents at the cost of a few vertebrae.*

*I shall not burden you with the details of my medical history except to say that they were endless. From pressure sores dissolving my skin and muscles to killing levels of poison in my blood I suffered it all and to top it all a less than brilliant team of doctors. Within six months of starting my physiotherapy I had managed to extend my first day's 3-second successful sitting in the wheel chair to hanging in there almost normally for hours at end. But that was the only star on my report card. My bladder stopped working; I developed infections, lost weight and literally became a skeleton. My frustration increased with the desperation of my doctors who appeared clueless about putting an end to my misery. It came to a point where they started contemplating the option of chopping my feet off to stop the spread of infection any further. That's when my parents, fully aware of their meager financial resources, nevertheless decided to take me to England for further treatment.*

*It was in Stoke Mandeville Hospital where it was diagnosed that I had fewer cells and more poison in my body. I had to lie on my face for over two months just to release the pressure on my wounds (talk about pillow*

*talk). Then there were a whole new series of operations and helpful treatment that made it possible for me to put on clothes like normal people. Trust me, it does not matter even if somebody else is dressing you up, all that matters is to feel and look normal. When you have not worn anything but hospital gowns for months you simply cannot comprehend the delight of feeling your old shirt on your back - Thank you God, for little mercies.*

*I was improving dramatically in England. A few months of rehab could have done wonders for me but there was this slight problem. My parents love for me was endless but not their finances. My father was an honest hard working army officer and had lived more on pride than money. Within weeks their entire life savings were wiped out in just trying to make me survive. Giving me a "normal life" was simply beyond their means.*

*I returned without my rehab but not without a new rather swanky looking wheel chair which incidentally has a silicon filled seat. The point here is that while many of you so called "normal" individuals are still hoping to get in touch with some silicon, I feel it every day. Anyway ever since my return, I have been plagued by one medical problem or another but frankly my medical problems have not caused as much pain or grief, as many people I have met over the years.*

*Let me sum up the problem: Attitude. People in my kind of predicament know it better than anybody else that they are not physically normal like others but neither are they inferior in any way. They are just different in appearance. And this is the key point apparently being missed by the majority of the people. Ignorant biases haunt the physically disabled more than their medical shortcomings. To cite one small example, the first college*

I applied to refused me admission on the grounds that I “would not be able” to take the pressure. How could they assume so without even giving me a try? Should I have gotten admission on the grounds of my grades or whether I walked into my class or rolled in my two-wheeler? Luckily I was accepted by PAF College as a casual student and turned up in the top ten students in our send-up examinations. I was allowed to sit in the board examination by the college and in a hurry to make up for my lost time I took exams for the two years in one go. I passed. So what if special permission had to be sought for allowing a writer to pen down my answers. The interesting bit however is that even my dotting parents at the time had thought it to be a needless stress for me. The silent message being sent to me unwittingly by my well wishing friends and family had been to accept my state and transform myself into a 'happy vegetable' content with my existence, starved of all challenges and achievements.

Everyone almost had me convinced that the only thing worth concentrating was on trying to walk again, and not on walking tall. Relax, take-it-easy were the phrases I heard most often in the initial years. No, I didn't want to relax; I had been doing it for years in my wheel chair. Yes I want to walk. Oh, I want it more than any living soul, but just because I am still unable to do it, does it mean life should be put on hold because my legs refused to listen to me?

Just as my legs refused to listen to me, I stopped listening to the world. I enrolled as a regular student in Sir Syed College and soon the color started returning. Once again I had friends around me. Sure many of them initially viewed me as an odd curiosity but unfailingly every

relationship developed into a friendship. I was getting greedy once again. In England I had seen people in my condition drive around themselves and of course I wanted the same. More concerned about my own safety my parents were in no mood to buy a car for a son who couldn't walk or even cough without assistance. It took a heavy blend of persistent arguing and emotional blackmailing for them to agree. I finally I got myself a small automatic transmission car. The hand controls had to be imported specially for me. But if I thought getting my parents to agree had been the easy part, I was in for a tough surprise. The first time I sat in the driving seat all I could do was pull the specially modified throttle. Many months and patient friends later, I finally drove the car myself. We handicapped may have to take the long road at times but we do arrive. Remember that.

Now it was time for getting a serious educational degree. Once again a combination of imagined bias and real problems almost frustrated me. Most of the business schools simply refused to entertain my admission application and the only one, which did, simply had too many stairs. Imagine losing out on a career ladder because of one's inability to climb stairs.

I have learnt one thing over the years: to unlearn the word impossible. Did I tell you by the way that finally I did manage to enroll in a private institution and earn my MBA degree? The degree has led to landing my first job and in fact I have typed out my story on my office computer (after office hours of course).

But before I end my story let me leave you with another, one; that of understanding and caring. If you think the physically handicapped people need your sympathy then

## Reinvent Yourself

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*you couldn't be more wrong. What they need is a greater understanding of their peculiar needs, even more important, a desire by the "normal" people to understand. Physically handicapped people are not half men or half women; in fact, they are twice the person than many around them, because they must strive twice as hard, if not more, to achieve the same objective as the healthy people around them.*

*Do you know it takes me more time to get dressed than it probably takes you to dress up, take your breakfast and make it for the early morning meeting in your office? But does that mean I should stop doing so because I am losing out in the time race. Just because you may be fortunate enough to be able to jump up three stairs at a time, does it mean you should become insensitive to the*  
064 *need of building ramps for people like me?*

*Do we ask too much when we say judge us on the basis of merit and do not prejudge us on the basis of a stupid bias. I have no problem if someone walks over to me and asks about my medical problem or for that matter walks over and does not even mention a word about it. I feel neither intruded nor pitied by either action but it all depends on the sincerity of the attitude. It's not what you say or you don't, it's how that matters. Like I said earlier, it is like walking. Majority of us can walk but how many of us can actually walk tall. Think about it.*

## Part 2: Tapping the Mind

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### **Sarmad Tariq**

Sarmad Tariq is a life coach, motivational speaker and a writer with the aim to highlight the importance of human potential. He helps others realize the positive significance of limitations at organizational and personal level.



He holds an MBA from American International University, Islamabad, where he majored in marketing and human resource management. He brings with him diverse working experience of more than ten years. While working for LMK Resources as team leader human resource department. He looked after recruitment and selection and contributed his thoughts to HR policy related matters. He is a certified support group facilitator from "Cheryl Watkins Institute of Chemical Awareness, USA. And co-author of Navitus' first published e-book titled A to Z of success. He regularly contributes content to Blue Chip Magazine, and on his personal blog.

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As a speaker/trainer he has worked with organizations such as Novartis, Merck, Procter & Gamble, Telenor, Standard Chartered Bank, Unilever, Pakistan Tobacco Company, Lakson Tobacco, GlaxoSmithKline Pakistan

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Ltd, Pepsi & Nokia Siemens Network Pakistan. He is also on the board of trustees of not for profit organizations such as Hashoo Foundation.

On March 26, 2004 he drove a distance of 1,847 km nonstop from Khyber to Karachi in his hand controlled car. He covered the distance in 33 hours and made a world record by being the first ever quadriplegic to cover the distance in such short time. The objective of his drive was to raise awareness about the latent potential of physically challenged. He is also the first ever Pakistani wheelchair bound athlete to complete a full marathon distance of 42.192 kilometers in Standard Chartered Lahore Marathon on January 30, 2005. And was the only wheelchair athlete to represent Pakistan and complete the New York City Marathon in 066 November 2005. As an athlete his adventures continue. Sarmad is a quadriplegic (paralyzed shoulder down), on a wheelchair for the past 20 years. He is married, and lives in Islamabad.

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## Part 2: Tapping the Mind

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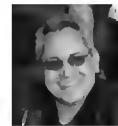
### Kamran In Conversation With Sarmad:

#### On Beliefs



#### Sarmad Tariq (ST)

From childhood to whatever we are today, our lives are based on a belief structure. We do and don't do things because we believe them to be either wrong or right. In your view, what is the role of beliefs in our lives and how do our beliefs contribute to our confidence?



#### Kamran Rizvi (KR)

All of us have opinions about things. For example, do you like red, brown or beige? You'll say 'I have a preference for red'. I'll say 067 'I like beige'. Do you think this room could do with a different layout or color? These are opinions. Opinions are thoughts we like, but are not overly concerned by.

When it comes to beliefs it's a different ball game altogether. It becomes more of a compulsion, such that people can even end up breaking their long-standing relationships due to their differences in beliefs. More often than not marriages break-up, people leave jobs, because of irreconcilable differences caused by varying beliefs between the two parties.



Dogma is a strongly held belief and is characterized by statements like: "I am right. I know the truth and this is

all there is. What others have to say is BS.” Dogma excludes any contrarian thought and holds that what one believes is the only truth and tries to universalize that. This is a dangerous condition. What the world is experiencing these days is the effects of dogma being exercised by different players. It's not a clash of belief's, it's a clash of dogmas. A sense of self-righteousness is dogma.

Quality of our life can be felt through our everyday experiences. Our experiences will at times be bitter, and at other times sweet. Our innate nature is to seek pleasant experiences. What is pleasant for me may not be for you. But an experience is what we go through every second, every millisecond and every day of our lives.

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We experience things consciously and unconsciously. So as we speak, things are happening around us. Our senses are detecting what is even happening in the background – the sound of the bird chirping, the whirring of the air-conditioner, and the din of hammers and drills in the construction work happening next door.

For me to enjoy a certain quality of life, my performance at what I do in my professional and social life has to be good. For example, if you are an analyst. You must be good at gathering data, collating and synthesizing it and then presenting the outcome of your analysis



effectively. If this happens, you will enjoy a positive experience. Your audience will appreciate your effort. You will most likely get what you pitched for. All these events will favorably impact the quality of your life. Your accomplished performance comes from behaviors that are shaped by your attitude.

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### On the Value of Repetition

**KR:** Repetition is the key to reinforce your learnings e.g., Physical exercise like push-ups. You repeat the process a number of times; Bathing - hopefully you take a bath daily; brushing your teeth and so on.

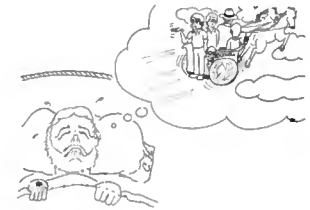
Reading is also a great habit. Read with the intent to share. This will require you not only to understand but to recall the core concept. It is in sharing an idea you liked that you will make it a part of your being. For example, when you hear a joke, you laugh. If you haven't shared it you may not remember it when you need to on a social occasion. By repeating things to yourself you are able to remember them better. You become skilled in the behavior you practice.

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### On Dreams

**ST:** People often entertain fantasies, wishes and desires things even though they appear far-fetched to them. Some dreams are an expression of a voice from within, something you have always wanted, you have always looked for. For example, I always wanted to be a world champion swimmer and that's a dream that can be achieved. However, if I said I want to hike to the moon, it would be far-fetched, or even delusional. What do you have to say about dreams?



**KR:** The word dream itself is very catchy. You can start a conversation by asking someone, 'What is your dream?' People will usually have something to say about it. This is an unfailing reality. They will think for a moment, and then you will observe a sparkle in their eyes, before they start to speak about it.

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Dreams are a positive picture of how things could be. The picture often describes a far better condition than the individual is in at present. You also see a sense of hope and optimism as that description unfolds. However, some people share their dreams, but they are laced with cynicism and doubt. They narrate the dream and then so to speak, 'delete' it with an "Ah, but this can't happen", with a tragic sense of surrender and defeat.

**ST:** They believe it won't happen?

**KR:** Yes. And they add, "Why go through the pain?" By doing this, their pain increases - it festers. This happens because on the one hand they are able to see in their minds eye what they would like, and on the other hand believe that the dream cannot be accomplished. The distance between such a desire and the point of disbelief is the pain they experience. It is sad to see people falling into this kind of trap. This stems largely from ignorance. We are mostly unaware about all that's happening around us and what's within us.

072 Dreams are a description of positive outcomes, full of beauty and richness. Dreams could cover life in general or be more specific to careers, family or community. Some people's dreams are an expression of the position they are occupying in society in some future time, or the reputation they are enjoying in their industry. Some describe dreams in a material and physical way, including details of the income they are earning, the kind of house they own and the cars they drive.

Dreams come in different shapes and sizes. What's common about them is that they are mostly positive, attractive and compelling. For some, dreams mean a state to be attained, and for others it remains a cause of pain and anguish.

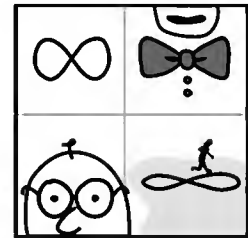
Therefore, one needs to distinguish dreams from hallucinations. Those who engage in idle thinking are wasting their time and those of their friends, colleagues and family. However, those who dream

genuinely with their eyes open, with a sense of responsibility and ownership are in for the good times. However, they will invariably face challenges and difficulties along the way.

Genuine dreams have the power to engage our body, mind and soul and there is real potentiality in them. A dream that does not engage you and doesn't engender a sense of responsibility in you, is no longer a dream, it is hallucination.

When we speak of dreams, we speak of the mind, where the dreams are formed.

073 Dream is the output of the mind. It is our job to realize and tap this infinite potential that resides within all of us to whatever extent we can. The most complex part of the human anatomy is the brain. I don't pretend for a minute to know much about it. I know just about as much about the human brain as I have knowledge of an air conditioner... an air conditioner gives cool air when you switch it on! Our brain is called a mind when it works and produces ideas. But this happens when you switch on the mind. The switch is motivation... our desire to achieve something or solve a certain problem.



Just by having a basic level of understanding of how our mind is activated and how it works, can give us immense satisfaction in terms of what we accomplish in life. Our minds can be tapped. It doesn't require a genius to know that. Most of us are not agronomists, yet we know how to pick the fruits in



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the orchard and enjoy them. Therefore, the message is clear, 'Pick the fruits now, and study the roots later!'

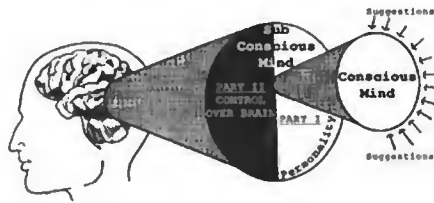
We have the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the unconscious mind. The unconscious mind lies in the metaphysical domain, which we will touch upon briefly, later. It is abstract and can be hard to pin down for the uninitiated.

For now let's try to understand the conscious and the subconscious and how the two relate to each other. This is an exciting domain and it has become easier to explain,

particularly these days, as computers have become commonplace.

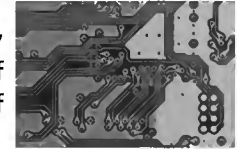
Terminologies used in computing serve as useful metaphors to comprehending how our conscious and our subconscious mind work.

Our conscious mind is like the RAM (Random Access Memory). Our subconscious is our memory bank – the hard drive where all the software and data is stored. Storage space in computers can go to gigabytes and terabytes. I don't have any idea what the ultimate storage capacity of the human brain is! In my view, its memory is dynamic and infinite. The languages we speak are like software that enables us to communicate with people of same and different cultures and traditions. The more languages we speak the bigger our world of possibilities becomes.



## Part 2: Tapping the Mind

Human beings have a known capacity to be able to comfortably speak up to a dozen languages. Of course, the task becomes easier, if we learn different languages when we are very young.



The point to note is that by talking to ourselves (intra-personal communication) we can begin to tap into our infinite potential which resides in our subconscious mind.

Choice of the words and sentences we utter come from our conscious mind (RAM). What we say influences our subconscious, whether we mean it or not. Just like the keyboard and monitor. When you punch 'L' key, you will see 'L' appear on the screen of your computer.

Likewise, the words we choose to use make an impression on our subconscious mind. Everything that is happening around us - known and unknown to our conscious mind, is being recorded in our subconscious mind. For instance, I remember in my early teens, listening to BBC World Service every night. I used to place my pocket radio under my pillow, and intently placed my ear close to the radio. I could listen to the programs in private, without others around me getting distracted... It served the purpose of a headphone for me in those days. As a result of continuously listening to BBC, my spoken expression in English improved considerably, without me realizing what was happening. It is not that I

was consciously doing it. I was casually engaging in some form of entertainment. I would



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listen to the various programs covering current affairs, sports etc. and drift into deep sleep, while the radio remained on. Data was still being recorded in my subconscious! As a result, I remember occasions, when out of the blue I would come up with information that not only impressed my friends, but also surprised me. I wondered how I got hold of that particular piece of knowledge.

Much later, I came to understand what was happening. The problem is that of storage and retrieval. Imagine if you stored data in your computer with random file and folder names, i.e., without giving it conscious thought, how difficult it would become for you to retrieve the piece of information you needed most.

076 Our subconscious mind contains everything we need to know to survive and function in society. The only problem is what to look for and in which file. Today, if you have a laptop or a desktop pc with an internet connection, you have access to unfathomable amount of information on any subject! As a consequence, search engines like Google, Yahoo and others came into play. Where is the 'Google' for my subconscious? How do I access my internal resources, which are disorganized because most of it is dumped and not filed in an organized manner?



Our subconscious mind records data that is coming to us through our conscious mind and that which has entered our mind subliminally, when we were least aware. So as we speak, if you can hear birds chirping

## Part 2: Tapping the Mind

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outside, those sounds are also being registered in our subconscious. We are not paying attention to it, but it is still being captured.

Whatever is engaging our five senses, the temperature, the humidity, the sounds, the smells, the paintings and furnishings in our room, the tea we are enjoying, it is all being recorded in our subconscious, unbeknown to us: Hence the concept of déjà vu. When you go to some place, it sometimes feels you've been there before! And this is our subconscious at work.



When reading a book, you will often come across a passage which instantly engages you, compelling you to re-read that piece again. It could be a phrase or a quotation which triggers something in you. Such moments indicate a connection between our subconscious and our conscious mind. When the click happens that is when recognition and engagement with the content commences. A lot of things that connect with us, means that they were within us from before! This is why it is important for us to reflect on this latent capacity within us all.

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**ST:** How do we do this?

**KR:** Good question! This reminds me of an occasion when I was conducting a workshop for managers in Karachi, and posed the question: “Do you control your mind, or does your mind control you?” As expected, some of them answered instantly, “Of course, I control my mind!” I followed this up with another question, “If ‘you’ control your mind then, who are you?” Responses like, “I am ‘me’” don’t hold water. I probed further, “Who are you?” and a person said, “I am my mind – if it wasn’t for my mind, how would I know ‘me’?!” Such confusion is the beginning of learning.



078 Can you imagine adults confronting such a question and realizing how little they really knew about themselves?! How easily we pass through life blissfully ignorant of our own essence. How sad it is that we can spend our entire life, never caring to discover who we are.

Ask any person driving a car, is he controlling the car or is the car controlling him? Of course, the obvious answer in this example is that the person driving the vehicle is controlling it, unless of course, the car is in a skid.

Rodeos are a good example in which wild horses are tamed by cowboys. Some fall, and some manage to hold on to the reigns while the horse bucks and jumps. If the rider retains his seat long enough, it becomes

apparent to the horse, who the master is.

If YOU are controlling your mind, then who are YOU?! Think about it. You have a body, a mind and a soul.



People often have trouble dealing with the term soul or spirit, which I am using interchangeably. For the purpose of this conversation they mean the same thing. It is more convenient to talk about the tangible, the logical, and the scientific. Spirit is considered too abstract by many to make any practical sense to them. Yet we can't ignore the spirit or the soul.

For example, I am standing in front of you. I ask you, “Can you see me?” You answer, “Yes!” I say, “Can you really see me?” You say, “Of course!” Now imagine me lying flat on the floor and there is no sign of any movement at all for an hour. What would you say now? You might say that I have gone, or that I am dead, or for that matter, I am no longer there. The question remains, what has gone? What you saw when I was standing is exactly the same as what you see as I am lying down, but with no movement! The only thing missing now is animation, or movement. What animated me has gone. I am the spirit. You are the spirit.

We are spiritual beings having a human experience, and not the other way round. Most people are stuck in the paradigm that holds, “We are human beings, having a spiritual experience.” The difference is as stark as day

and night!

The eyes reveal whether a person is dead or alive, conscious or unconscious, clear or confused, focused or dazed. Eyes say it all. Eyes truly are the windows to our soul.

Who are you? Now you know. You are a spirit, housed in a body which has a mind!

**ST:** Death occurs when something goes wrong in our body. Heart fails, you have an accident. It shuts your brain. There is a physical reason for the collapse of your body. If my brain ceases to function and I am unconscious, then where is the spirit?

o8o **KR:** Some patients who are brought into the emergency wards of hospitals are classified as brain dead. They are vegetating. They are unconscious. They are in a coma. But their physical body is alive – they are animated. They are breathing, but they are not there mentally. But for all practical purposes they are dead. But this condition is not described as death. Death is when there is no movement. There is something that is keeping that body in animation even if the mind has gone to sleep - It might come back. There are known cases, where people who have been in coma for over five years, miraculously recovered. These are mysteries we don't have answers to. One thing is for sure, body gives up the spirit and then it goes to rest. When the heart or the kidney fails, it is the body saying to the spirit, 'You are free, go



now. We don't need you anymore.'

It's just like electricity working through a hi-fi system – the fuse blows, and the electric current ceases to flow. There is a very strong connection between this abstract force and the physical, tangible element. PCs are not animated without electricity; cars are not animated without fuel/energy.

Our physical self is entirely dependent on the spirit. The heart stops when the spirit walks. Otherwise, why is it that some people who suffer a stroke or a heart attack don't die? They are revived, because the spirit says, 'Hang on, my time to go hasn't come yet!' There is this amazing connection.

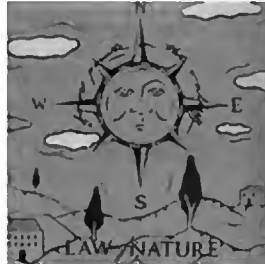
What you need to keep in mind is that you are a spiritual being, housed in a body, and your mind is at your service to help you navigate your way around this planet and also to enable you to comprehend what's happening within and around you. If for some reason the mind switches off, before condemning anyone as brain dead, don't forget, it may come into life again – miraculously, because that source of energy is there, somewhere.

Moving forward, remember that you are a spiritual being in control of your mind, which controls your body and its behaviors. This is a crucial hierarchy to keep in mind for a goal-oriented and stress free living.

There are people who believe in God and there are those who don't. There are those who believe in a larger force or the higher laws. But one thing is for sure - People don't die, only the forgotten do. If death is the

end, how is it that we still remember people from 5000 years ago? Yet there are also people we forget, who are alive today! Whether they shout or holler, we still choose to forget them.

As I see it, life is memory. On this basis, consider how long people can endure in time? I wonder how long my children, my grand children and my great grand children will remember me for. How long will my impact endure? Life is as long as its memory endures and proof of being alive is having an impact on the lives of others, regardless of whether you are on this planet or not. No wonder teaching is described as a profession where the practitioners touch eternity every time they impart knowledge to their students.



How is it that you could have two people living apart at two separate ends of the planet, 15,000 miles away from each other and yet feeling so close to one another, while on the other hand you could have a couple sitting side-by-side, next to each other, in close physical proximity, and feeling miles apart from each other?

What is it that connects people? Is it physical proximity? Or is it some resonance – two hearts beating as one, feeling connected across vast distances? This is a real phenomenon. It is something people can relate to.



And because people can relate to it, there is substance to it!



### On Memory and Imagination

KR: We have been talking of dreams, which are manufactured in the brain. Brain is the organ, and it's called a mind when it functions. You are a spiritual being and you control your mind. If you don't, it will! Your mind has two distinct jobs; Memory and imagination.

Whatever happened to you in your past, (remember your experiences and how your beliefs were formed), is stored in your memory. Our memories cause us to reenact our beliefs and reinforce our beliefs through the outcomes we experience, both good and bad. Repeated positive outcomes become a virtuous cycle and repeated negative outcomes take the form of a vicious cycle and we get trapped in it.



Let's say, you turn up at a wedding ceremony of a friend on time. You find that the hosts arrive an hour late; you generalize and then decide never to turn up to weddings on time; next time you go a few hours later; you come home late; you suffer from a lack of sleep; you turn up at work an hour late; you are irritable all day; your performance drops; your relationships at work suffer; you come home brooding; your spouse criticizes you for being home late and missing your child's birthday and on and on it goes. These are the

perils of the vicious cycle.

Then there is your capacity to imagine. While you are sitting wherever you are, you can imagine anything you want. You can imagine yourself sitting on the moon, on the tip of the crescent. The tip is pointed and you can feel its sharp edge. It is very uncomfortable. You can imagine that. But such imagination is delusional and futile. It is non-serious. The point is that your mind has the power to imagine anything.

The moment you add to your imagination, sincerity and responsibility, and declare to your relatives and friends what you are imagining, it will become doable. Dreams are an output of our imagination. Our power of imagination is driven by responsibility to accomplish it. This responsibility is not just to yourself but to others you care for, because you have shared it. No doubt you have sufficient pride in you not to go around declaring things you have no intention to deliver on. If you did that you are either shameless or you will fall in your own eyes... What can be worse?

A lot of people don't share their dreams because they are not willing to take the responsibility for it. This could be due to lack of confidence and lack of self-belief. Everyone can indulge in idle chatter, but other than being a short-term amusement, it serves no real purpose. It's just wasted energy.

Human potential is infinite. Your power to imagine can help you discover your current level of potential. Your potential is directly proportionate to what you can imagine sincerely and with responsibility.



## Reinvent Yourself

sky. This tantalizing visual has altered the human paradigm in a significant way. The term globalization has acquired currency. This happened because human beings could, for the first time, see the context in which they thrive.



Our conscious mind is that round apple, placed on our round planet. That's how small our conscious mind is, compared to the vastness of the subconscious. This is only a metaphor. Even our earth is bounded and has specific dimensions. Our planet is a mere spec in the cosmos.

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Imagine the power you have when you consider that you have at your disposal your conscious, your subconscious and the unconscious mind! This gives you astonishing potential.

You start by recalling that you are a spiritual being, housed in your physical body, with a mind that aids your journey on this planet for the duration of your life.

Your body and mind are your vehicles that help you survive and thrive on this planet, just like you need a space suit to live on the moon. The shirt you wear will age, your skin will age and whither, your flesh and bones will give way in time, your mental faculties will weaken. What will remain intact is your spirit, which will leave its body when the time comes, and you will return to where ever you came from.

## Part 2: Tapping the Mind

The sad part is we forget where we came from and we have no clue where we will go, simply because we just don't remember! This knowledge is in our unconscious - a domain which is beyond the scope of this tiny book. Just keep in mind the fact that all of us, who are alive today, came from somewhere. We arrived, which is half of the story. Our origin and destination remains a mystery. There is no place called nowhere. What is important for you to know is that you are now-here!



o99



### On Master-Slave Relationship

**KR:** The concept, 'You are a spiritual being who controls your mind', brings us to the idea of the 'master-slave' relationship. The job of the 'slave' is to unquestioningly obey the master. The 'slave' exercises no will of his own. Interestingly, HMV is a record label and the letters stand for 'His Master's Voice'. The logo depicts this idea, showing a dog sitting by a gramophone. The dog is the slave.



Now let's come to the three elements: spirit, mind and body and their inter-relationship.

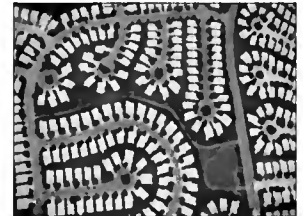
Body is the slave to the mind. What the mind says, the body does. What spirit commands, the mind executes. People are suffering from stress because the spirit, mind, body relationship is messed up. When our soul is suppressed by the mind, and given the back seat, tensions and stresses set in.

Try lifting a 40kg suitcase with your little finger! You will have serious trouble! If your mind is given the load that your spirit is meant to carry, you are bound to end up with psychosomatic illnesses. If you ask me, "How many years have you worked in your life so far?" My answer will be, "I don't remember working ever in my life." Masters don't work! I am a spiritual being. Since when did spirit have to do any work? Our mind does the work! It does the thinking. It processes our decisions. We command it to give us the results we want. For

example, I am writing this book. I have commanded my mind to come up with this book. My mind suggested that I contact Sarmad, who would stimulate me through his questions and extract the information needed for this book.

Anyone feeling the immense pressure of work is not recognizing a resource which is currently suppressed in his being! Since when did our soul have to do any work? Our soul simply commands, asks questions, and directs the journey of life. It is our mind that labors and executes our wishes and desires, or at least, this is how things are meant to be - in their proper place. Why don't we use this immense resource at our disposal, instead of getting flustered unnecessarily? We get disturbed and distracted because our spirit is not seated on the throne of our life. Mind and body are there to serve us.

Since you are the master, and your mind is your slave, will you ever allow your mind to go negative? Will you allow it to be cynical? Will you allow it to take you into a depressive mode? Never do that. Those are back alleys you don't want to enter. They are cul-de-sacs.



Your spirit's natural disposition is to take you to opportunities and challenges – to a world of meaning and purpose, where you accomplish inspiring ends, while ensuring that you remain as safe as is possible in the journey. The worst outcome will be that you are

released! Your spirit is not afraid of death, your mind is. Slaves fear losing their masters. Death frees your soul and does not mark its end. This may seem to you as a strange paradigm.

Like using Google, your search engine; you, the master, put questions to your slave. The master doesn't answer questions. For example, a king puts questions to his knights, councilors and advisors to gain the information he needs to govern. Likewise, you, as a spiritual being, simply need to decide what you want to do, or where you want to get to, and then ask your mind to show you how to get there! GPS has caught on in North America and Europe big time. It has also come to Pakistan. You simply punch in the your destination, and the GPS navigates the journey for you, telling you when to turn, while updating you with stats of the journey along the way.

All you have to do is to plant questions in your mind. E.g., I need to improve my relationship with xyz. What do I do? I am behind on my production targets, how can I improve the numbers? The student body at my college wants me to speak at a function in a week. I don't know what to say. What should I do to influence my audience to take greater responsibility in their lives? After having put such questions to your mind, just wait. Relax. Party! Ideas will pop up in your head when you least expect them. So be prepared and make a note of them, before they evaporate in thin air.

We are all creative beings. What I have described above is a process of idea generation. Ideas will only



come to you when you seek them through your questions. Your curiosity is an asset. Use it.



### On Your Commanding Self

**KR:** All you have to do is ask the questions (command your mind) with clarity of intent and purpose. Your conscious mind (Google) will search the answers in your subconscious mind, where all the needed information resides.

Once the questions have been planted, ideas will flow to you, but only when your conscious mind is silent. This happens when you are calm and relaxed. The best way to quiet your conscious mind is to engage in light physical activity like washing your car, washing dishes, pressing clothes, gardening or taking a gentle walk while communing with nature.

094 Ask the question, you get the answer! Sometimes you will wake up in the morning and find a text message with the very quote that you were looking for! Or one day, you will be gifted a book, just the one you needed at the time. These are not happy coincidences. This is nature's way of rewarding you, when you are tuned into a clear vision and have a sincere intent to achieve it. The entire universe conspires to help you, when you are genuinely focused and committed to your goal. And this takes us into the realms of the vastness of the unconscious.

How do you activate the search function in your mind? Just pose a question with clarity and seriousness! You can ask dumb questions or bright ones. An example of a dumb question is: "Why did I get fired from this hard won job?" Such



an enquiry may lead to a response which says, "Because you deserved it. You were lazy and always blamed others when things went wrong." How will this make you feel? Awful, I hope. But this doesn't help. It feeds the vicious cycle that leads to loss of self-esteem and ultimately, to depression.

Your subconscious mind contains all kinds of data, positive and negative, just like cities in the world have separate arrangements for sewers and for clean drinking water. Why enter the sewers of your subconscious mind through your dumb questions. You'll only get filthy and end up feeling miserable.

On the other hand, in a similar situation, a bright question might be, "I have been fired. I don't like this. What can I do differently in the future to avoid such an unpleasant outcome?" And you might well hear your subconscious mind tell you, "It's not the end of the world. Accept it, you were foolish. In future, turn up to work on time without fail, fulfill your commitments to others on time and if you don't understand something, ask, and make sure you know how to do what you have been assigned. When you get stuck, and you fear missing an agreed deadline, sound the alarm well in advance, and don't hesitate to seek help from concerned people. Know that there is nothing you cannot learn!" This is like clean drinking water that will nourish you body, mind and soul. 095

What do you think therapists do? They ask you bright questions to direct your mind to help you get out of the smelly sewers and into the world of fresh, clean waters of your mind. They use questions to help you confront your fears by taking you there. If you see litter on the

floor, you will have to go to it to remove it! Our subconscious mind is also full of litter, which often overshadows the immense wealth of empowering knowledge within us.

The only way to overcome your fears is to do what you fear! For example, if you have a phobia of spiders, go to the moment when you first encountered trauma at the sight of the spider. This moment is embedded deep within your subconscious. Once there, deal with it by replacing this traumatic experience/image with a positive one. Visualize yourself responding positively to the event. It is a bit like editing... taking out the bits you don't want and replacing it with stuff you do. The key is to go to the moment when the fear got embedded in your psyche.

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Questions are the answer. Use intelligent questions to get into your subconscious escape self-sabotage. At the end of the process you will feel good because you draw out from within you the goodness that you have.

**ST:** Doesn't it seem that we are very reactive as human beings? We spoke about how our beliefs are shaped by our experiences. So it seems that your thought process is dependent on your experiences and how you interpret them.

**KR:** Once you have gained this knowledge that your thought process is shaped by the experiences you have had in life and how you have interpreted them, you can take control and re-shape your beliefs by learning how to interpret life events to your advantage. Lack of this kind of awareness makes you a passive bystander as your beliefs are affected by others without your

conscious consent.

If something happens to you unexpectedly, for the first time, and you don't like it, that event automatically registers in your subconscious mind negatively. When the same thing happens again at a future time, you react to it exactly as you did before. For example, I have seen

individuals who have a problem trusting people. Why? It is because they have been betrayed a few times before.

Instead of learning from their past mistakes, such individuals unwittingly fall into a vicious spiral. Their life becomes miserable because they live in fear and doubt of others.



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### On Trust

**KR:** To trust others, you must first learn to trust yourself. Trust is not blind. When commencing any new relationship, you need to do your homework e.g., getting references, verifying credentials etc. This is what we mean by saying 'trust is not blind'. Once the preliminaries are done, you need to commence your relationship in a trusting manner, while keeping your eyes open at all times. If behaviors, contrary to what you expected, surface, talk to the person concerned. Clearly point out your concern. If you are satisfied with the response you get, proceed with the relationship. Harboring doubts about others while working or socializing with them is a stressful endeavor. Quite pointless, don't you think?

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Whether your reaction is positive or negative will depend entirely on what you told yourself the first time round the event occurred. Let's say you were about to cross a main road. Instead of the driver of the on-coming car giving way, he swerved his car dangerously, barely missing you, frowned at you and drove on. You could have reacted in rage by showing him two fingers or you could have felt grateful that you avoided an accident and that whatever emergency the driver was in, he was able to attend to it. Both are possible reactions to such an event. The latter approach puts you in control of your mind and keeps you calm and at peace with yourself. However, the former reaction, while understandable, is unproductive and harmful to your health and well-being in the long run.

You have the power to interpret any event to your advantage. Use this awareness to make a great life for

yourself and for your loved-ones by deliberately shaping your beliefs to serve you well in good times and bad.

### A House and a Sandstorm

**KR:** This reminds me of an analogy of a house and the sandstorm. Imagine that you are in your house in an open country side. You know that in a few minutes a sandstorm is about to hit. What will you do? Your windows are open; it's a pleasant day; birds are chirping; a cool breeze is blowing; fragrance of flowers in your garden has permeated every corner of your home. Hopefully, knowledge of the impending sandstorm will cause you to close the doors and windows of your house just before the storm strikes. This is common sense! You would take these steps to ensure that your house remains safe and clean. This would be the sensible thing to do to prevent the dust from ruining your home, as far as you can possibly manage. Sadly, people, who are unaware, open the windows of their minds when the storm is raging. And when the environment becomes conducive, they shut the doors and windows of their minds. As crazy as this may seem, it is worth remembering. Why allow negative influences to impact your being adversely?

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You have the doors and windows to your mind. Shut them and open them at appropriate times. Protect yourself when needed and open your mind to influences and experiences that will strengthen you. To do otherwise, would be a folly. Make conscious choices in all situations by keeping your purpose in mind. In life you will see the beauty of spring and summer and you will also, occasionally, get caught in dust storms of

all kinds. Now you know how to intelligently deal with such realities by opening or closing your doors and windows wisely. Cease being a victim of circumstances and take charge of your life. If your house is filled with dust, it will be a miserable place to be in. It is your responsibility to use your knowledge correctly and keep your mind healthy and positive.



### Installing an Anti-Virus

**KR:** Why do you think we have McAfee or Norton installed in our personal computers? There are so many viruses out there! We need anti-virus programs to protect our data. If we don't detect and quarantine viruses on a regular and timely basis, our systems would crash. Have you installed an anti-virus program to protect your mind from the harmful effects of negative influences in your environment? If you don't do a regular live update and protect your data, you will remain vulnerable and are bound to get hit. Every time you get caught unprepared, you can either curse your luck, or learn from the setback to ensure you remain protected in the future.



It's easy to blame others for our own misfortunes. It's only when you take responsibility for your life that you start turning each adversity you face into an opportunity that propels you to new heights.

Life is about making intelligent choices at each turn. You have the resources that will help you move towards your goals. Why engage in the act of self-sabotage and enter the awful world of 'sewers', when you could so easily be swimming in clean waters? Your spirit will always take you to rivers where fresh water flows.

Your spirit is nourished and strengthened when you commune with nature. Think of how you feel when standing at the base of a majestic mountain; or at the sea shore, with your bare feet, on wet sand, watching the sun set in the vast multicolored horizon. People naturally yearn for nature. People, who live in artificial environments, away from nature, for long periods of time, are known to suffer from severe mental illnesses. At the very least, people become irritable, impatient and intolerant, when they spend an extended period away from the tranquility of nature.



### Big Cities

**KR:** Big cities like New York, Calcutta, Karachi, are densely populated. To counter the ill-effects of such abnormal conditions, planners make provisions for parks, so that people can find some respite in the man-made conundrum. The further away we are from nature, the more intolerant and self-centered we become. Why is it that the disease of loneliness strikes individuals in big cities, despite the fact that there are millions of people living in close proximity to each other? How come, people become socially isolated and extremely self-indulgent in congested urban settings?



A sense of loneliness is the poverty of the soul. Our spirit is disturbed when we stay too long in artificial settings. It is starved. Concrete walls, metal roads, steel structures, glass windows, and lamp posts don't nourish the soul.

A healthy spirit, in its right place, is better able to control the mind, and get the mind to serve it, as it desires. And if we let the spirit flow, our lives will be beautiful. Those of us who are suffering and struggling are simply not aware of this empowering reality.

### Loving What You Do

**KR:** Once you have realized that you are the master and your mind is your slave, you won't have to work a day in your life. Then all you will do will seem like a party, so to speak. The day you start loving what you do, you won't have to work a day in your life!



To nourish your mind and to keep it going, all you need is balanced meals, rest & recreation, regular exercise and some time for yourself (e.g., meditation, prayers etc). In return, your mind will do all the work for you for no salary, you keep what you earn and enjoy.

Your mind is great at finding solutions to the problems you face. It comes up with fantastic innovations that we all are benefitting from. The marvels of science and technology are all around us. Our whole world is technologically driven – these are outputs of the human mind. If we think this is it! Wait – this is just the beginning! Road, rail, sea and air transport as we know them, will become things of the past. Today, we have developed the capability to transport voice, data and visual images in milliseconds anywhere, around the world... thanks to the internet. In the not too distant future, you will have people living in Sydney and working in Johannesburg! Remember Star Trek? Beam me up Scotty!



## Reinvent Yourself

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Our spirit knows no boundaries. Your spirit cannot be confined. It's when you neglect your soul that you start worrying and become stressed about the day-to-day issues you face. Suppression of the spirit is causing most of the ills we witness in different societies the world over. When you allow spirit to flow, generosity and love will become common and all the inhabitants of our planet will enjoy a caring and just world of plenty.

When your mind controls you, you fall for the tangibles... money, property etc. Greed for wealth and power has become a dominant feature of life for a multitude. We become insensitive to the needs of others. As a consequence, we find billions of our fellow human beings suffering from mal-nutrition, lack of access to basic health, sanitation, clean drinking water and of course decent education.

With so much to go around in terms of physical and intellectual resources, why is it that we still see the growing social, economic, cultural, ethnic and intellectual divides. Why is this social injustice perpetuating itself globally? In my view, it is because our souls have taken the back seat.

The phrase: "Show me the money" comes when your mind controls you. A state of happiness, bliss and fulfillment is achieved when you control your mind. If cash was the solution to all problems, God knows, there is enough of it doing the rounds. Unfortunately, it's not circulating as widely and equitably as it should.

## Part 2: Tapping the Mind

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### Master Needs To Be a Slave

**KR:** The moment you start thinking of yourself as the 'master', you get into trouble, because such a thought breeds narcissism and over-confidence.

How do you tame YOU - the spirit? By surrendering yourself to the higher power - some call it God or Allah (the Master of all there is), thus becoming His slave!



A creeping sense of omnipotence in you will spell the beginning of your end. Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely!

Leadership and followership go hand-in-hand. To be a good leader, you also need to be a great follower – a follower of principles that elevate the human spirit, and not of ego/s.



### A Quick Recap

**KR:** We have discussed the conscious and the subconscious; imagination and memory; Dreams as outputs of our power to imagine and seeing imagination as a tool for knowing our current potential. Through our dreams we attain greatness. What is greatness? It is so relative. Just like success. Everyone will have his or her own notion of greatness. To me, greatness is, doing what you want to do, while fulfilling your obligations to your loved ones; knowing that you could have done whatever else you had put your mind to. Keeping this definition in mind, whether you drive a cab, become waiter in a restaurant, head a country, or lead a global conglomerate, you have touched greatness.

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I pray, that you will step away from this book and exercise your choices wisely, knowing that there is so much to do. Carefully consider the multitude of alternatives before you. It would be sad if you remained stuck in a vocation that does not engage your heart, only because you thought, you were not capable of pursuing other alternatives.

### Power of Imagination

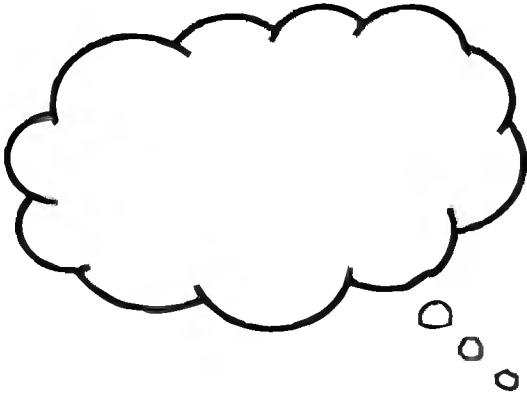
**KR:** Whether we go through an actual or an imagined experience, our subconscious mind cannot tell the difference. This fact unlocks a wealth of possibilities for us. By using the power of our mind, we can tour the world, while sitting in our drawing room. Keep in mind that our conscious mind drives our subconscious mind – the place where our infinite potential resides.

The picture or movie that we see on our mental screen is our imagination at work, which is resourced from our subconscious. What you simply imagine, is a scenario in your mind that has not happened, but our subconscious mind records the event as though it actually transpired.



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### Riding our Stallions



108 **KR:** Now imagine you and I are both riding our stallions in a desert. Yours is black and mine is white. When you look around you, all you see is the horizon – a clear blue sky meeting the golden sands, wherever you look. You see no mountains or buildings. All you see is the wide expanse of an undulating landscape covered in sand. The sun is right up there, above our heads. We are wearing robes... you are on a black horse wearing a white robe, and I on a white horse, wearing a black robe. Our stallions are galloping through the desert at full speed. We are not hungry or thirsty... we are feeling our very best as we swiftly move through this splendid landscape.

What you have just imagined has been recorded in your subconscious mind as though the event really occurred. As a result of this exercise, we have been there! It is recorded as a fact in your mind! The beauty is that we have shared an experience together. One day, when we actually go to the desert and ride our stallions, we

will be experiencing déjà vu! It's as though, we've been there before. We will be reliving the entire experience. We'll be on familiar ground!



### Feeling at Home in a Palace

**KR:** You can build your capacity in any field, using the power of visualization. Once you have done it in your mind, you have actually done it! The more you visualize yourself performing a deed in your mind, the better you will be at performing the deed, practically, in real life. The more mental rehearsals you do, the better you will perform in real life.

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When you see a person enter a palace, and he looks amazed, it is because he is seeing it for the first time, you can tell that he is on unfamiliar ground. Anyone who sees something for the first time is bound to be shocked, amazed or surprised. This shows through in your facial expressions and body language.

You have the ability to see anything, any person or any place, hundreds of time, before you encounter the event, person or place in reality. And when you do, you enter familiar ground, just like an individual visiting a palace, and feeling at home.

What stops you from imagining any situation or reality? Remember, your subconscious mind cannot tell the difference between the imagined and an actual event. People get shocked or freeze, because the occasion they enter is bigger than them. For example, a junior

supervisor, meeting his company's chairman for the first time, and losing his nerve and not being able to say what he had intended. This happens when we have not imagined ourselves making a positive impression in such an encounter. We arrive into a situation unprepared at our own peril. Hence we fail to seize the moment.

The world is a small place, what to speak of your house. If you can sincerely and with responsibility imagine yourself making a contribution, in any field of your choice, on a global scale, so be it. Otherwise, even Islamabad will feel too big for you to fathom.

110 Everything falls into perspective when you dare to expand your thinking. This world can become your playground. This is what brings us to Shakespeare, who said that this world is but a stage, with each one of us playing our role in it. Wouldn't it be nice if you chose the role you really wanted to perform? Instead of idly wishing for things and positions, that you don't really want, but pursue them only because the world considers them great.



Wake up! Your greatness lies in your character and stature, and not in your position or status.

### Stature vs. Status

**KR:** Greatness is not about positions. It's about being what you want to be. No one, other than you, can decide what is great and what is not. You are as rich as you want to be. What you are earning today is what you think you can earn. Expand your thinking, and voila, your income will increase likewise. If you have achieved good health, genuine respect in your community, and heartfelt happiness in life, you have achieved a great stature.

If you are looking to the public to recognize you, that is status. You are wasting your time. If you don't recognize you, no one will! What you don't value, has no value.



"I like it, but I'm looking for more of a status symbol. Any way you can double the price?"

### Price and Worth

**KR:** Everything in a shop has a price tag. A laptop could be purchased for \$1,000. But what is it worth to you?

Price and worth - These are two words, which are often used synonymously. Add the word 'less' to both and you get two different and opposite meanings... priceless and worthless. You are priceless, not worthless! Every human being is priceless. Your salary or the fee you command is not your worth.



### You are Rich beyond Measure

**KR:** I often hear people remark, "Pay me my worth." No one can. Not even Bill Gates or Warren Buffett. You are bigger than that; you are priceless. You are beyond economics. You are, so everything is. When you are not there, nothing is. What could be more precious than that? Your very presence, gives meaning to you, of everything on this planet. If you don't exist, nothing will matter to you. That's your reality, isn't it? You are here, so I am here, and everything else around you is too.

Where ever you go, that place comes to life! When you greet someone with a smile, you make a difference in that person's life, you get a response.

Where you are not, that place is as good as dead for you, until you arrive there. This whole planet is alive, because you are alive.



You can make a difference, large or small. You have the power to do it. You are not a small part in a big machine. You are a very significant player in this game of life. Everything on this planet and in your immediate environment is there to stimulate your thinking. The more aware you become of yourself and your environment, the more affective you will become in every dimension of your life, personal, professional and social. Remember, you don't have to work. Your body and mind will do it for you.

Imagining and dreaming a better tomorrow for yourself, your loved ones and for the world at large is your business. With your spirit at the helm of your life,

all things you aspire for come within your reach. Introspection will allow that space to your spirit, which it needs to do wonders. You will enjoy a life that you have envisioned for yourself – one that is free from worries and unnecessary tensions and doubts.

The worst that can happen is that you will only return to the place from where you came! You came, so you came from somewhere, and you are going, so you are ultimately going somewhere. Where that place is, is not within the scope of this book.

114 People like Malcolm X, Che Guevara, Jimmy Hendrix, Muhammad Ali and countless others. Are they really dead? I wonder. They are legends and have made a place in history. They are remembered by millions of fans. Their influence continues. Through what they stood for and what they did, they have immortalized themselves.



There are many ways of looking at yourself. Exercise your freedom to develop your own self concept. Dogs and cats do not have this capacity - you have. You can determine what you are and who you are. An apple will be an apple. It is destined to be just that. You can be whatever you want to be. Only you can answer the question, "Who are you?" No one else can or should do it for you. Your future is like a blank canvas. It will be what you make of it. Or it will be what you allow others to make it.



### Making Your Future in Your World

**KR:** You will find true happiness the moment you shape your life according to your vision and dreams. If you allow others to use this space and shape your life, your spirit will cry and you will be in pain.

We're all fallible, but we also have streaks of genius. Confidence is an expression of who you are! Whatever you are, be grateful for it and celebrate it. Whenever you find faults in your behavior, remember, you can fix them. It's not as though you can't. And you can fix them when you want to fix them.

Confidence is enhanced when you begin with a sense of self-sufficiency, i.e., you already have what you need, and that no one can buy you – you are priceless – you are unique! 115

Approaching life with an 'abundance' mentality, as opposed to a 'scarcity' mentality gives you a head start. Your demeanor, your posture, your possibilities just change when you move with confidence, grounded in a paradigm of abundance. As a result, you remain calm and focused on your journey. Worldly distractions fall by the wayside.



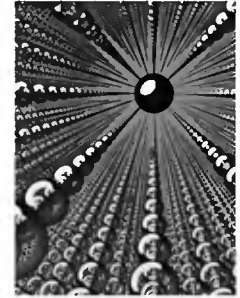
You have learned to see the conventional world for what it is: Glitz and glimmer, a virtual reality that is to be enjoyed by us, and that we are not to be taken in by its seductions. Wealth and associated power are illusory. Your true power lies not in what you have, but in what all you can do without.



### Inter-World Travel

**KR:** We all live in our own worlds. I live in mine. You live in yours. There are billions of worlds out there. Not just one. Interpersonal communication, therefore, is like taking a tour of all the other worlds around you – worlds of individuals in your family and your social/professional network. In this magical adventure of inter-world travel, you also invite others into your world.

The world you live in is merely a reflection of who you are. As you change for the better, your world will improve and visitors to your world will be inspired.



Your spirit will be at peace when your life script is written and lived by you.

Reinvent yourself... The future is what you make it!



## Part 3: Kamran's Interview by Red Cut Magazine

**January 2011**

1. How did organizational development and personal improvement movement begin for you as a profession in 1991?

*My brother and I founded KZR, a management consulting and training firm in Islamabad, Pakistan, back in 1991. It has since spawned several organizations - thus kick-starting the 'learning and development movement' in the country.*

*For more details, visit [www.kzr.co](http://www.kzr.co). Here you can also download my book "GO FOR IT!" which is available in pdf.*

2. Considering the power of influence over people your profession gives you, do you ever feel hugely responsible and scared? How do you deal with such emotions? 119

*I do not subscribe to your expression that trainers and teachers have "power of influence over people". Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is that you cannot teach anyone anything, unless the other is keen to learn. I see myself as a student in the business of teaching. This helps foster the spirit of co-learning and keeps me in a state of continuous learning and improvement. I learn more from practical insights shared by my participants this way. I am also mindful of the fact that real change happens only when participants decide to accept an idea, take responsibility for it, and apply it in their daily lives. At best, my colleagues and I try to create conditions in which learning flourishes – the key ingredients being informality, candor and mutual respect for diverse points of view expressed on any subject.*

**3. What is TRG and the vision behind it? What spurred its existence?**

You will find much of the information on TRG's website ([www.trg.org.pk](http://www.trg.org.pk))

TRG was started in Karachi in 1995 by a small group of well meaning and inspiring HR professionals and trainers in Pakistan who felt the need to start a forum where best practices could be shared by the HR/OD fraternity for the benefit of each other. This venture has blossomed. TRG meetings are held on the last Thursday of every month, and the 156th meeting concluded a few days back.

120 TRG's vision is inclusive and aims to serve as a platform for all HR and OD professionals in Pakistan, where they can share ideas and concepts that will further strengthen the learning and development industry in the country. Plans are now underway to launch a chapter in Islamabad and Lahore this year.

**4. How do you think problems of the corporate world have changed over the years? What 3 key challenges do you think the corporate world faces these days?**

Change in mentality is not keeping pace with the exponential changes we are witnessing in technology. Look at our globalized world. It has ever increasing connectivity. We are experiencing an information explosion. Smart phones are in common use; social and professional networking sites have grown e.g., facebook, LinkedIn etc, e-commerce is booming; witness the success of eBay, Amazon. Add to this rapidly changing technological environment, our post 9/11 world and the resultant clash of ignorance between different cultures.

This is posing a new set of security challenges that threaten our freedoms. The accelerated pace of growth in emerging economies like China, India, Brazil and Russia is creating further imbalances in the interdependencies between nations. Large economies like the US are struggling with excessive debt. The rich are getting richer and the poor, poorer. This is heightening tensions all over the world. Tunisia and Egypt have witnessed uprisings fuelled by willful neglect of the marginalized, caused by poor governance. Growing populations, excessive consumption and waste is taking its toll on the environment.

In this threatening context, there are plenty of opportunities... All the problems we are experiencing are opportunities in disguise. Individuals are becoming more aware and are beginning to make a difference. They are exercising greater choices. The playing field is being leveled for all and sundry - thanks to technology making this possible. 121

For businesses to remain competitive in this day and age, need for speed is imperative. Speed of idea to market; and responsiveness to customers and employees, without in any way sacrificing needs of stakeholders and quality of products and services. To meet this demand for speed, while maintaining quality and safety standards, organizations have to adapt drastically and fast. Greater empowerment with leadership being exhibited at every level is vital. This will be possible when individuals, companies and communities develop significantly and step up to shoulder greater responsibilities in their respective spheres of influence.

Challenges that organizations will face in the coming



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years will vary according to the industry and markets they are in. However, in general, I would suggest the following three:

- *Leading and managing continuous change while being comfortable with ambiguity*
- *Building growth and sustainability through planned and accelerated staff turnover.*
- *Remaining ethical while competing and collaborating for business in local and global markets*

5. If you were to describe an ideal set of traits in a corporate personality, what would they be?

122 *Humility has to be at the core, followed by integrity, competence for the tasks at hand, vision, and a genuine passion for people. The latter implies that you hire people to grow them and not to get work out of them – their output will be a by-product which will serve as evidence of the growth and quality.*

6. Do you think Pakistani employees in the corporate world receive the treatment and compensation they deserve?

*Not in a vast majority of cases. The best examples that come to my mind are that of Telenor, Pakistan Tobacco, Unilever and many others. The worst examples are to be found in organizations in the public sector. I'd rather not name them. It is public knowledge.*

## Part 3: Kamran's Interview by Red Cut Magazine

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7. What keeps you inspired and upbeat going forward in life?

*What keeps me going is the immense human potential on this planet, and particularly what I find in Pakistan. I have traveled all over this country and have found love and generosity in the people I have met. This is despite the extreme hardships they face daily. Pakistan is rich in per capita happiness and gratitude – particularly when you meet people from low income groups in the urban and rural areas.*

*I am inspired every day by witnessing results of how much good can happen when you expose people to greater awareness and better education. The fact that people can make a difference if given the tools and opportunities fills me with hope for the future. I cannot understand how we as a nation have managed to neglect millions of our brothers and sisters in this endeavor. Access to clean drinking water, good sanitation and hygiene, quality universal education, dispensation of swift and fair justice, healthcare, safety, and basic human rights are the minimum that everyone human being deserves. This minimum level must be achieved as a priority by any self respecting nation. Lack of resources is a lame excuse. Much has to be done by every citizen. We are all individually responsible.*

8. How is what you are doing right now similar to what you always wanted to do?

*Nothing beats the experience of seeing a happy child with a sparkle in her eye. Whatever little I do in this direction gives me immense happiness. All that we need to do is to multiply smiling faces in our villages, cities,*

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*nations and our world. This thought keeps me alive, on purpose and motivated.*

**9. Who do you turn to for advice and guidance? Does it feel paradoxical for a person who gives answers to people to have questions himself in life?**

*My natural instinct is to turn to God for Guidance and Protection. He is always there for me and for anyone who turns to Him for Help. God Helps in mysterious ways. We as His instruments on this planet, help each other learn, grow and prosper. He is the ultimate source of all there is.*

*I don't give answers to people. I am not the man with the answers! I would like to think that I am the man with the questions. When individuals (corporate executives, students, parents) come to me for advice, I try to understand their problem. I encourage them to define the issue more clearly and explore the root causes. I help them think through practical alternatives that they might want to pursue. At times, to facilitate the process, I do share my point of view with them in the hope that they may find some part of it useful.*

**10. If there was one key inspiration you could give, whom would it be to, what and why?**

*I would like to tell everyone I come across at work or in my social life, "You have everything you need to achieve whatever you want without breaking the hearts of those you love. Just become more aware of your blessings - those that lie within you and those that surround you; take responsibility for your life, and the world of opportunity will open before you."*

## Part 3: Kamran's Interview by Red Cut Magazine

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**11. How do you see your contribution moving ahead in life to your present work and the country?**

*God has been most kind. I am living my dream ever since I set foot in Pakistan. It is heartening to see the love for learning and growth take root and flourish here. A phrase I love, "When you teach, you touch eternity." It feels great to be a part of the teaching and training fraternity who are doing just that. And that too, with greater vigor!*

**12. How will 2011 be for the corporate world of Pakistan?**

*2011 will be whatever we make of it. Mediocrity is not our fate. Our future will only be a consequence of the choices we make individually and collectively.*





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Kamran authored his first book, titled: Go For It! in 2010, which is available in pdf on home page of [www.kzr.co](http://www.kzr.co).

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**List of Blue Chip articles as uploaded on Navitus website: [www.navitus.biz](http://www.navitus.biz)**

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