

FOR PREVIEW

THE ANANDA
CRUCIBLE

A BUSINESS COMPASS
for THE 21st CENTURY



GAUTAM MUKERJEE

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STRIKINGIDEAS

*Dedicated to my REIKI Grand Master
and friend Bijan Chattopadhyay
who suggested I expand the 2-day Crucible Workshop
to a book and encouraged me every step of the way.*

*"I am more and more convinced that
whenever one has to vent an opinion
on the actions or on the writings of others,
unless this be done from a certain one-sided enthusiasm,
or from a loving interest in the person and the work,
the result is hardly worth gathering up.
Sympathy and enjoyment in what we see is in fact the only reality,
and, from such reality, reality as a natural product follows.
All else is vanity."*

*— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
(August 28, 1749–March 22, 1832)*

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FOREWORD — JAMES O'TOOLE

*Professor and Director Emeritus of Neely Center for Ethical Leadership,
University of Southern California, Marshall School of Business*

Fasten your seatbelt because you are about to embark on a thrilling ride into the future! Now, there's a trip well worth taking. Your expert guide on *The Ananda Crucible: A Business Compass for the 21st Century* journey is Gautam Mukerjee, a successful business leader and an accomplished philosopher, technologist, historian, futurist, and teacher. Like Leonardo Da Vinci, my friend Gautam is a Renaissance Man with a practical bent. The highly desirable future he limns in these pages is no utopian fantasy or sci-fi never-land on a distant planet. Instead, he offers a functional map that business practitioners can use to navigate their organizations away from an outmoded and stagnating present into a more effective, innovative, and human-centered future.

Gautam draws on the latest thinking in science, psychology, technology, and business management. Combining it all with profound insights from India's religious and cultural traditions—to create a new, holistic business model that promises to open vast, previously untapped possibilities and potentialities. He eloquently says, “*A more compassionate world where the best of human endeavors can flourish.*” Sounds a bit ambitious? Well, nothing of great value has ever been created without ambition. The saintly Gandhi admitted that he was driven by “*ambition,*” and I suspect that if he had not been so driven, India might still be ruled by a pompous Viceroy in New Delhi! — So here's to bold thinking and acting — If they say — it can't be done, then do it! And yes, changing things requires courage, and that's why Gautam is so brilliantly qualified to be your guide. He learned to be fearless at an early age when he frolicked with his grandfather's pet Bengal tiger (I didn't make that up). Ever since, in words and deeds, he has taken risks to create a better future for India.

Gautam's particular gift is the rare ability to see connections between things that others find disparate and unrelated. He explains to us how recent advances in artificial intelligence, physics, neuroscience, psychology, and managerial practices are intertwined and how understanding the ways they are is key to building that better future he envisions for India. He is a great explainer. (Note how clearly and simply he explains the consequences of Moore's Law in Chapter Two). I have heard him explain parts of the Bhagavad Gita to Indians who thought they knew their own culture, and I have heard him explain technology points to geeks who believed they were up-to-speed in their field.

But he is good at explaining — in plain language — the relationships between knowledge in such fields as quantum physics and Jungian psychology. He seems to

have read everything of importance written over the last half-Century and briefs us concisely on what we should have read but didn't. For example, I'm thankful to have learned about an important thinker in my field of organizational leadership, Danah Zohar, who I should have known about. Gautam is curious about everything and delighted to share everything he knows to our benefit. In the process, he is dead set on breaking down rigid disciplinary boundaries and discarding creativity-inhibiting paradigms that limit executives' perspectives and hinder their ability to respond to a fast-changing world. In this regard, *The Ananda Crucible*, in the tradition of Peter Drucker's *Age Of Discontinuity* and Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock*, described an emerging era in which change was occurring faster than most people could cope. In Gautam's view, Drucker and Toffler grossly underestimated the pace and scope of change. He intends to help his readers understand and prepare for the future before it turns them into dinosaurs.

Gautam isn't content with merely warning executives that the world is moving faster than they are. His goal is to offer them a clear path to a brighter future. He provides numerous practical steps organizations need to take to thrive in a volatile and unpredictable business environment. I especially appreciate the lessons he draws from the "near-death" experience of motorcycle manufacturer Harley-Davidson when competition from newcomer Honda drove the company to the verge of bankruptcy. Necessity became the mother of invention when Harley's leaders decided their only hope was to throw out a half-Century's worth of practices — the very ones that had made the company successful — and experiment with totally new approaches in every aspect of their business, strategy, marketing, manufacturing, labor relations, and more. So it was out with the old and then created the new. Their company mantra became Innovate, Innovate, Innovate. And it worked—at least until it was time to re-create again. It never ends. So the secret, according to Gautam, is for Indian executives to learn how to create conditions under which their people are continually encouraged to innovate.

But Innovation is not just a technical issue, or is it simply an issue of technology; it is also a mindset and a set of habits. And the requisite for all that is leaders who can create organizational cultures in which Innovation can flourish. That requires the particular type of leadership that Gautam calls servant leadership. He finds examples of such leadership in the traditions and history of India. Thus, servant leadership is not a foreign idea that needs to be adopted but an Indian idea that needs to be acknowledged and practiced more widely. On this score, Gautam is optimistic, convinced that India can, and will, succeed in the mode of East Asia's economic "tigers." After all, India is home to most of the world's tigers!

India has the untapped creative talent needed to out-innovate the top companies in Europe, Japan, China, and Korea. I live adjacent to Silicon Valley, where thousands of Indians fuel our area's world-renowned Innovation. Imagine how much more talent there is in India itself! The country simply can't afford to leave half of its human resources on the shelf—or export its talented women to America, where they become scientists, doctors, professors, and corporate executives (and one Vice President).

That's why Gautam stresses the necessity of addressing India's glaring issues of gender inequality, starting with the education of girls, (where it lags far behind almost all emerging economies).

In short, this book is a wake-up call for the leaders of the Indian industry. But it is also a post-graduate education in a single volume. Through his wonderfully informal and conversational style, Gautam's ebullient and irrepressible personality emerges from every sentence he writes. He delightfully leads us back and forth in time, across cultures, transcending disciplines, moving from insights about the paranormal, on the one hand, to organizational theory on the other, showing us how it is all complexly interrelated and relevant to practical men and women. He puts all of this into *The Ananda Crucible*. A crucible is a melting pot, and Gautam is a modern-day alchemist stirring together a remarkable array of ideas, research, theories and experience and then melting them all down to form an ingot of pure gold. An ingot of wisdom, dear reader, that he joyfully shares with you in the chapters that follow.

Happy Reading,

James O'Toole
San Francisco, California

FOREWORD — RONOJOY DUTTA

Former President of United Airlines (USA) and Former CEO of Indigo(India)

The daily barrage of information we receive confirms that the world is changing at a dizzying and accelerating pace. As practitioners of sound management practices, hurtling through this kaleidoscope of rapidly changing customer preferences, intensifying global competition, creative disruptors erupting on the scene unannounced and unexpected, and employees' expectations and behavior radically deviating from historical norms, forgive me for experiencing a certain sense of bewilderment and for being periodically paralyzed by WTH moments.

Like intrepid mariners navigating through unknown waters, ultimately, we all have to find our compass, moral as well as economic, but like all good mariners, we also hunt diligently for good maps and guides to point us true north. Coming across Gautam Mukerjee's *"The Ananda Crucible: A Business Compass for the 21st Century"*, I felt the jubilation of a mariner discovering a treasure map.

If rapid change is the reality we are grappling with, Gautam lays out a very comprehensive yet methodical approach to tackle the problem. Gautam has done the heavy lifting for us: the mind-numbing work of exhaustively reviewing the latest literature and capturing the best ideas from disparate fields. The key is to get all these heterogeneous thoughts and ideas and forge them into a homogeneous package, which is what *The Ananda Crucible* does with marvelous ease, producing an easy-to-read, easy-to-understand collection of ideas that leaves the reader with a highly satisfying Ah-ha feeling at the close.

Whether in the context of our brief personal lives, the extended life of a corporation, or the long arc of civilization, the challenge is never to peak, never to stagnate but to constantly evolve. *The Ananda Crucible* walks us through the inevitable and omnipresent forces of preservation, destruction, and creation and distills them into corporate behavior and leadership implications. Early on in our careers and in the early life of a corporation, progress is made through individual brilliance through the hard skills of efficiency and productivity. As we mature, either as an individual or a company, the soft skills of organizational behavior, teamwork, and the building of a common purpose become more important. The analogy is quite accurate, we are journeying from a steadfast mechanistic world to a fluffier quantum world, and we need to learn to operate in it.

I loved the emphasis on the HR department as a critical and often neglected tool in a world of rapid change. In the nineteen-eighties, American Airlines and United Airlines dominated the skies over the USA. American's success was attributed to its

fierce Finance department, which called all the shots in the company. United's success was attributed to its skills in the commercial area of aircraft scheduling and revenue management. We kept stealing talent from each other in the perceived area of competence. Delta's strength was in HR, but they were this sleepy little airline, and no one paid much attention to them or respected their in-house talent. After the industry got into turmoil with 9/11, bankruptcies, and industry consolidation — lo and behold, the sleepy, slow-moving Delta emerged as the king of the hill. Through the turmoil, I would have to say that Delta's neglected HR department trumped American's much-vaunted Finance department and United's self-pride Commercial department.

Data is the new fuel, the new combustion engine of future economies and corporations. Companies are busy stealing talent from one another, and the restlessness of the current generation is resulting in a high turnover of employees. But the prized talent is data analytics, where the most bidding up of salaries is occurring. Fortunately, Indians are naturally comfortable and adept with numbers, and this talent pool will serve the country well.

Start with a base of hard scientific evidence from the West, add a generous helping of the latest work in the social sciences, sprinkle in a dollop of timeless wisdom from the East, stir vigorously to create a consistent and comprehensible texture, and serve up a tasty course on corporate structure, organization behavior and leadership skills.

Well done, Chef Gautam. I thoroughly enjoyed the treat.

Ronojoy Dutta
New Delhi / Chicago

INTRODUCTION

Our journey begins with a picture painted on a wall in a cave for the first time in human history, perhaps 50,000 years ago. Art was the first of our creative forms. And then we began writing. We wrote on walls and scratched letters on wet mud that was fired and preserved as cuneiform tablets. We wrote on papyrus paper, silk, palm leaves, and birch bark. We carved letters on stone. The Epic of Gilgamesh came to us 3,800 years ago in this form. We discovered block printing and created books. We painted on walls, canvas, paper, and cloth. We carved marble and stone into beautiful forms. Coins carried the faces of kings and queens and their dates. The printing presses and typewriters churned out material like never before. And then came the computers and Cloud.

Visualize all the data and information that has been created in every one of these forms and more. Compile the total quantity since the beginning of recorded time and stop at 2003 CE. Place this quantity on one side. And on the other will be an equal amount generated every 15 minutes.

Frightening? Yes, it certainly is because the information flow is changing the world quickly. It is altering our ideas, giving depth to feelings we did not have, and shaping our minds in ways we cannot understand. And remember, this is just the beginning because the speed of change will only quicken with months and years.

Another aspect of our journey is far more significant contextually than digital growth. As humankind, we were enamored with our scientific discoveries. Galileo and Newton's empirical mechanistic worlds held us firmly, and we refused to see anything beyond. The ancient wisdom of the past was labeled 'irrelevant.' This, too, is changing, and the mechanistic world of compartments is merging with a far greater space where everything is connected. Science opens up to the unknown and discovers amazing truths about unlimited human potential. This new world of unlimited potential is seeded by qualities that improve us — kindness, compassion, and respect.

This story is about the 21st Century Organizations mastering these forces and dealing favorably with new challenges coming from our home planet dying and 50% of the human race losing out on Gender bias. Organizations that rise to these challenges and change will prosper in a sea of opportunities.

*And, so I present to you, dear reader,
The Ananda Crucible: A Business Compass for the 21st Century*

DEFINING THE NEW CONTEXT

The new Context requires a fresh set of working parameters for delivering Innovation, the key to future prosperity.

These are :

1. New organizational structure resting on a New Culture that helps create Innovation
2. New technical and digital skills to be in sync with the new world of increased computing power and the challenge of the pandemic
3. New soft skills to optimize the new technical and digital skills
4. A new way of thinking — holistic, around the corner, at the edge
5. New areas are to be developed, and some old areas are to be shut down
6. A new way of relating to people — diversity is the key
7. A new way of collaborating — both internal and external
8. A new way of leading
9. A new way of looking at stakeholders, our planet, and our values — because social media reveals all, with community judgment following
10. A new way of Being

THE ANANDA CRUCIBLE'S PURPOSE

The World Economic Forum (WEF), in partnership with McKinsey & Co, has recently begun a community called the Global Lighthouse Network (GLN), which brings organizations into the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) that is now happening. There are only 100 plus members worldwide, but the Community is expected to grow quickly. The onus is on manufacturing using Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, Data Analytics, investing in people through Learning & Development, protecting the environment, caring for the Community, and through Empowerment, creating a common Purpose that everyone connected with the organization truly believes in. These will be the 21st Century's Organizational Elite. They will win customer and community love. They will win markets and bring in new products through Innovation. The objective of every company today is to aspire to the Lighthouse model.

*The power of Ananda Crucible's is its holistic perspective
in creating 4IR Lighthouses
with perennial wisdom and current cutting edge field studies*

The Purpose of The Ananda Crucible is to identify the challenges and the new approaches by sharing the best field studies and academic research recently conducted by the world's most respected institutions. This is an exercise in appreciating the new evolving macro with support from research in the micro, not vice-versa. Every corporate needs to recognize these aspects and embrace the New for success. The Ananda Crucible is your pointer for the corporate journey to this new world of the 21st Century.

As a Compass, it points to a winning direction in the new era.

- It is not a detailed functional area prescription for which specific books exist subject to subject.
- It is not about the pure creativity that entrepreneurs represent as they bring to us what did not exist before. Yes, we do cover some aspects of this creativity as 'Disruption', but our story is about the lives of existing organizations and their need to transform with Innovation to the 21st Century to meet the new challenges successfully.
- It is not a pointer to a Utopia where a corporate may enjoy heavenly bliss. Utopias and Dystopias exist temporarily. Sometimes they co-exist in our minds.

More than any book outlining Utopia or Dystopia, I love Joseph Campbell's *"Hero with a Thousand Faces"*. Instead of a stationary state of positivity or negativity, Joseph Campbell's world is in constant motion with elements of both. The Ananda Crucible's Purpose is all about Campbell's life work on the underlying roots of Human Nature spread across the world regardless of countries or ethnicities. Campbell found that nearly all the world's mythologies have a similar underlying theme. The Hero feels a "Call", the fulfillment of which requires him to move out of his comfort zone. If he makes up his mind to respond, then a "Purpose" takes hold of his being and helps deliver strength to overcome the various challenges he'll meet on his "Quest". Dragons, monsters, and asuras pop up to delay, stop or even kill. These external or inner devils must be vanquished. Allies will help, and traitors will betray. Sometimes his "Quest" may be diverted from its true path. He will have to return to the "Purpose" again and again till he is victorious, not just for the "Quest" itself, but also for an inner evolutionary transformation that makes him better, higher, deeper, and more understanding of what it is to Be. This is the world of Tolkein, Luke Skywalker, and Harry Potter. It is also Nietzsche's world through his Zarathustra.

And then what? He will find another "Call" waiting for another journey because the path to self-realization and transformation is neverending.

*The "Quest" is your road to self-transformation
and becoming a 21st Century Organization.
It is a place where only Winners and Heroes reside and play.*

THE THREE ROLE MODELS FOR OUR JOURNEY TO THE NEW

I have had the privilege of observing the Tatas (at arm's length) for half a Century and seen both their haloes (many) and their warts (few). I've chosen two persons from the family's past as our role models for The Ananda Crucible, as, without any doubt, they are the creators of modern India's business and industry. Let me introduce these role models to you.

The building was dark and dirty. The rooms smelt of mildew and fear. Years of neglect had taken a toll on the Liquidator's London office. The clerks were tired, underpaid, and lacked motivation. Their prime task was to avoid confrontation with Lucifer,

Satan's assistant, a nickname given to the Liquidator. The man thrived on bankrupt companies. Every new case was a challenge that required the liquidation of all remaining assets and transferring the proceeds to creditors. He never met owners as, inevitably, they absconded when their firms moved here. The Liquidator called upon his staff, lawyers, and sometimes the police to enforce his rights.

The young man from Bombay stood patiently in the foyer as there was no waiting room or seating arrangement. His clothes were wet from London's constant rain. He tried calming his mind, still in turmoil after the negative responses from his bankers and principal creditors. They had refused his plea for "Time." The Bills of Lading for ships to China were worth nothing. Instead of the fortune, he was expected to have; the China situation had converted his documents to waste paper.

Finally, a clerk arrived and led him through musty corridors to the large office of the Liquidator. The dim lighting, stacks of documents, and the man's cruelty created an atmosphere of danger and cold fear.

What followed was unprecedented. A miracle never repeated in the Liquidator's annals.

The fifteen-minute appointment stretched to hours, at the end of which an Indian was appointed to act on behalf of the Crown as his Liquidator. And there was a bonus too. He would be paid a monthly salary in British Pounds for his efforts. His role was to be the Liquidator's official assistant in ensuring his assets were sold for their true value and creditors settled. A clerk was called, and the appointment letter was issued authorizing Jamshetji Nusserwanji Tata to liquidate his father's company on behalf of the official Liquidator, with a remuneration paid monthly by the Liquidator!

Jamshetji fulfilled his obligation and then proceeded to create his empire, starting from a capital of Rs 21,000. It is worth US \$300 billion in market capitalization today and covers over a hundred countries with 800,000 employees. He envisioned India's best steel and power plants, hotel, and the very best institution of higher education, the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Being the best in anything is difficult, but doing it in four separate areas is Godly. Because of his vision, integrity, and love for the country, he is recognized as one of the makers of modern India. He is also known as "*The Man Who Touched Tomorrow*," which is the underlying theme of our journey.

This story is not about Jamshetji, yet everything in it is synonymous with what he believed, worked for, and did. Recent studies from Harvard, MIT, Stanford, INSEAD, McKinsey, Tuft, and others on what form the 21st Century Organization must take is all J N Tata. That is why I chose him as the first role model cum guide as we explore what leads to Innovation.

Our second spiritual guide on this Innovation journey is a man who created India's first airline, the country's best commercial vehicle, watch, jewellery, tea, and IT companies. He built Asia's first Cancer Hospital and Fundamental Research and Social Science institutes — Tata Memorial, TIFR, and TISS. This humble, kind, and generous man never stopped creating in his long career as head of the Tata group. Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoy Tata, also known as JRD or Jeh, innovated against

enormous odds using Empowerment to expand from 14 to 95 companies with total dedication and the highest business Values. We will draw inspiration from JRD's life and work because his Servant-Leadership is the platform on which the new 21st Century model rests.

The corporate winning strategy paradigm shift from Efficiency of the 20th Century to Innovation in the 21st Century is based on a single issue — the rise and rise of technology with the new work culture arising out of the pandemic. Our inspiration path will be lit by a group of 7 Indian techies who now control the most significant force in the entire history of humankind. It is a USA-made technological tsunami with Indians at the steering wheel. Their rise is on meritocracy alone. If the seven were one country, their organizational market capitalization (2022) would be larger than the GDP of every nation on earth, barring only USA, China, and Japan. That is the size you must keep in mind. Let us identify these 7 CEOs with the organizations they lead and their place of origin.

1. Microsoft — Satya Nadella, Hyderabad, Telangana, India
2. Alphabet (Google parent) — Sundar Pichai, Madurai, Tamilnadu, India
3. Google Cloud — Thomas Kurian, Kottayam, Kerala, India
4. Adobe — Shantanu Narayen, Hyderabad, Telangana, India
5. IBM — Arvind Krishna, West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh, India
6. Palo Alto Networks — Nikesh Arora, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, India
7. NetApp — George Kurian, Kottayam, Kerala, India

In terms of Techno Power, they are incomparable, and only Elon Musk (SpaceX), Jeff Bezos (Amazon Web Service), Larry Ellison (Oracle), and Steve Jobs' Apple legacy can hold a candle to them. We will examine this power and much more towards creating an awareness of a unique story unfolding. It has interesting exotic dimensions revealed through the mysteries of Quantum Field Theory, multiplication of computing power, unraveling of the Genome, appreciation of the Feminine Force, and what Meditation now signifies to neurologists. Perhaps we can call these seven techies the new Saptarishis? They are our 3rd shining light on this journey.

These 3 Role Models are the North Star for The Ananda Crucible's Compass.

THE READER-NARRATOR RELATIONSHIP

This is a 'Fireside Chat' journey. We will build awareness of the most path-breaking books, journal articles, and research studies that point to a new world where Innovation, magical waves, love, compassion, sustainability, diversity, and Gender respect co-exist. We will also greet some of the people who have brought these riches to us — who they are, what lives they led, and what their beliefs are. Wherever possible, we will have Indian cases, thoughts, and traditions to help bring these ideas to our contextual framework. Our journey will connect the dots that independent researchers have meticulously created with their field studies in different areas of organizational functioning. This is the macro story arising from their outstanding micro research and fieldwork.

Imagine two close friends chatting over endless cups of tea with digressions, exciting asides, personal anecdotes, and news of some momentous events happening that have a huge impact on the future. There is excitement. There is a wonder. And there is concern that changes must come to greet these events with friendliness, not enmity, so that the future shines. That is what The Ananda Crucible journey is about.

TITLE - THE CRUCIBLE OF WARREN BENNIS

A few words about the title will add emotion to our journey. The MIT Sloan School of Management set up India's first Indian Institute of Management at Calcutta (IIMC) in the 1960s. Harvard set up the second at Ahmedabad. Professors from MIT made regular visits to Calcutta in the initial years to oversee the programs. One of them was Warren Bennis, the ultimate Guru of Leadership theories, with over 30 books on the subject. Being in the 7th batch, I missed him by a whisker. We studied his books and answered questions about his ideas. Many years later, while at my mentor cum friend Jim O'Toole's home in Malibu, California, I lamented that Warren Bennis made his last visit to IIMC just a few months before my joining. Jim gave a wry smile and offered to connect us. Professor Bennis was not in Massachusetts but right there in LA! He was the Founding Chairman of the Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California. The next day Warren came over for dinner, and we spent an unforgettable evening discussing everything under the sun — including Calcutta in the sixties.

Warren Bennis wrote an article for the Harvard Business Review titled "*Crucibles of Leadership*," in which intense life challenges lead to significant positive transformations. Warren says, "*We came to call the experiences that shape leaders 'crucibles', after the vessels medieval alchemists used in their attempts to turn base metals into gold.*"

I named my two-day workshop on the transformation of managers to leaders to meet the Innovation challenges of the 21st Century — The Crucible Workshop. It honored Warren Bennis, who passed away a few years ago. This book expands my workshop, and the title is in memory of his India visits to create IIMC and his Transformational Leadership ideas.

*Warren's analogy of the alchemist's ceramic vessel, the Crucible,
is also our journey's symbol of the process where organizational metal turns to gold.*

TITLE - THE ANANDA OF THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads came at the close of the Vedic era in India, and that's why they are called Vedanta, meaning the end of the Vedas. The dates are murky, but I would go with around 800 BCE. The Sanskrit word Ananda is difficult to translate but would mean something beyond Bliss. It would be the Joy that comes through Self-Transformation where the Soul connects with ultimate Reality — the Pure Consciousness of the Universe. The concepts of Self-Awareness, relating to the Pure Consciousness of an Energy filled Intelligent Universe, and achieving Self-Evolution through the Connection; are dealt with through stories and philosophical debates.

Ananda would be the perfect state of existence.

The Ananda Crucible is an awareness-creating collection of ideas on 'what' the 21st Century Organization needs to win through transformation.

Let us journey forward, remembering that we carry three shining lights of inspiration to show the way whenever darkness invades our confidence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I had my MICS Aortic Valve replacement cardiac surgery at Hyderabad on 12th March 2020. My convalescence was a dream run thanks to the kind, warm and loving hospitality of dear friends Sreedhar & Renuka and Jagjit & Rabinder. The Ananda Crucible began at Hyderabad on 12th May '20 with my first glass of wine after surgery to celebrate Sreedhar's birthday. This book owes a lot to them as the pandemic lockdown of 3 months passed smoothly with so much happiness and loving care showered on me in their homes.

During my school and college days, my reading would always be 20% in curriculum and 80% in my areas of interest, which were unending. This pattern continued in my post-graduate years at IIMC, where I discovered a library of 50,000 books. I spent most of my time there (and on the sports field) on books unconnected with the daily curriculum. However, two Professors offered courses that caught my imagination and directed my reading. They were Kamini Adhikari and Savitri Chattopadhyay.

My teaching career began in the late 1980s with Dr. Kamini Adhikari persuading me to share a course on Entrepreneurship at my alma mater, the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. We shared the course over the next four years and it gave me immense pleasure. Kamini was my teacher at IIMC, my friend, and now co-faculty. Her vast knowledge, research, and soft, humble manner made her my perfect role model. Her 1969 book "*Organization and Administration*" with co-author Ishwar Dayal of IIMA was the grounding material for us Indian MBAs in the 70s. There were wonderful articles from Warren Bennis, Douglas McGregor, Edgar Schein, and many others. Kamini also introduced me to the works of Erich Fromm and guided me for my paper on his "*Escape from Freedom*." My love for Erik Erikson's works developed under her tutelage. A big thank you, dear Kamini.

In our second year, Dr. Savitri Chattopadhyay came from Syracuse University and offered a three-semester course on Modern Political Theory. I was the only student who took the full package on "*Credit*," while many classmates attended her lectures with interest. She introduced me to Robert Dahl and Gabriel Almond and how to observe the 'Systems' that run political fields. As done for Kamini, I read extensively for two term papers I wrote for Savitri. I learned that she passed away a few years ago. The Ananda Crucible owes a lot to her. Thank you, Savitri.

The Tata Management Development Centre (TMDC) is a Tata Steel unit. My teaching began here in 1991. What I love about TMDC is the freedom to experiment. I was encouraged to be Innovative and in the 1990s brought in Michael Porter's Competitive Strategy, Robert Greenleaf's Servant-Leadership, Sumantra Ghoshal and

Christopher Bartlett's Transnationalism, Kenichi Ohmae's Globalization, and a case study of Identity and Leadership using Arjuna and Karna. Naren and TMDC encouraged Donn and me to begin the 2 Day workshop of The Tata Story, which then spilled over to many other Tata companies. However, I would like to give the credit for this to the Spirit of JN Tata because, in an eerie, mystical, and totally unbelievable way, the full 2-Day Tata Story curriculum came to me within a couple of hours, which is an impossibility. Another JNT Pure Consciousness factor is that despite doing the program over a hundred times in the Tata group, Donn and I have never felt boredom. This, too, is an impossibility but strangely true.

I would like to share something very personal on The Tata Story, which carries a message by itself. Tata Steel's MD Naren scrutinized the curriculum and participated in several valedictory sessions in 2014, taking feedback and accepting the Value commitments personally from each participant. He ensured that the VPs sent the best executives first instead of holding them back because of 'heavy workload' excuses. Soon this Value program took off and became a 5-star item on the training calendar. About three years later, Donn and I were together in Hyderabad for the same program at Tata Projects when we read the dismal financial quarterly results of Tata Steel. We decided to waive our honorariums for The Tata Story for some time. We phoned Naren and informed him of the decision, but got a real mouthful instead of gratitude. First, Naren tried to convince us that the results were skewed because India had done well, Holland was ok, and only UK was in trouble. When that line of reasoning failed to change our decision, he threw a real grenade which knocked us out. He pointed out that The Tata Story taught the Values that govern the Tata family. We should never undervalue Value. By not taking our honorarium, we would be doing that — undervaluing the immense Value of The Tata Story. Thank you, dear Naren, for the lesson. We'll never forget it.

The Tata Story brought Donn into my life. We traveled to all parts of India and spent many quiet evenings talking about things that matter and laughing at things that didn't. Donn has been my elder brother, friend, guide, and spiritual caretaker. Thank you, dear Donn, for being a pillar in my life.

TMDC also allowed me to create The Crucible Workshop on transforming a 20th Century organization to the 21st Century, of which The Ananda Crucible is an expansion. This was a real challenge as knowledge is one thing, but putting it together as an intense learning experience is quite another. After the first 2 Day Crucible Workshop, where participants slogged well past midnight on the readings and appeared next morning bathed and ready for the 7 am pranayam and guided meditation session, we decided to seek guidance on what worked and what needed change. Thank you, dear Rashid, for the detailed feedback over a biryani dinner at your Jamshepur home. Thank you, dear Amrita, for coming to our Kolkata home for dinner and offering some valuable suggestions. The 2nd workshop improved, as did the 3rd, and by the 4th, we were on a roll. The seed of The Ananda Crucible was planted here.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to TMDC for giving me a teaching platform for the last 30 years, with the freedom to always try the new.

Living next to XLRI at Jamshedpur brought home some benefits. My son Rohan and I used to jump over the 4 feet back wall and play tennis on their court. Soon more serious connections began, and from 1991 I shared courses with several faculty members. Father PD Thomas SJ, Director of XLRI, and I had a deep friendship with a long partnership that went from sharing a leadership MDP course to working for the Planning Commission for the newly created state of Jharkhand, collaborating against conservative forces during XLRI Board meetings for pushing through new ideas like the on-line program (a novelty 25 years ago) and finally, conceptualizing and creating the Xavier Institute of Tribal Education (XITE) with Tata Steel's help. As Chairman of XLRI Board's Finance Committee, I saw firsthand PD's struggle to make ends meet, which the outside world was blissfully unaware of. The institute turned around during this time, with new constructions creating the future. Dr. Jamshed Irani was a tower of strength as the Board Chairman. If Sir Jehangir Ghandy helped XLRI take shape by giving the land and helping Father McGrath and the American Jesuits set up shop, then Jamshed Irani's tenure was the take-off point for the institute with PD as Director slowly steady the ship, expanding and quietly building the magnificent entity XLRI is today. I'm grateful to Jamshed and PD for the opportunity to serve this wondrous cause and learn so much about the management world in the process. Thank you both.

My macroeconomic exposure and learning went many steps up thanks to one man who fought India's suffocating "*License Raj*" for decades. As the Director General of CII, Tarun Das chipped away at the mountain of bureaucratic obstacles, using as tools the best in Indian industry and the forward-thinking in the government. It was training, seminars, and workshops with industry and government jointly working, until one day, the mountain crashed. Tarun did this with enormous fun and savoir-faire in days when regulations didn't allow you to breathe without governmental permission. Through Tarun's wonderful band of merry men, I met many exciting personalities but the three I received mentoring from (unknowingly by them) were very special, and all 3 had the extreme humility that only comes from deep security on the question "*Who am I.*" Jamshyd Godrej, MV Subbiah, and Suresh Krishna became my teachers, like Dronacharya for Eklavya, but there was no finger-chopping here. Jamshyd showed me how to progress with interest in the new. Subbu and Sita's simple habits and lovely home showed what is really important in life. Suresh's sense of fun reinstated my own beliefs, and laughter was a constant factor as I traveled with him across Germany to bring FDI to India as a part of the CII team. Thank you all, and especially Tarun, for the lessons.

Jamshyd's wife Pheroza pushed me into my Zoroastrian adventure by gifting the 3 volume English translation of Delphine Menant's 1898 French "*Les Parsis.*" These three volumes and her magnum opus "*Zoroastrian Tapestry*" became my trusted companions as I acquired more and more books on this wonderful ethnic group. It is my humble belief that the "*Zoroastrian Tapestry*" is the best book India has produced in

the last 75 years of Independence. Our Tata Story 2-day workshop has a session on Tata's Parsi DNA, going back to Zarathustra and his beliefs, which would never have happened without dear Pheroza's gift. On a lighter note, I must also thank her as a foodie for bolting from the "*Zoroastrian Tapestry*" office with Firoza Mistree (co-author) and Sudha Seshadri (editor) to make it by the skin of our teeth before the massive lunch hour rush at Mahesh Lunch Home. Their appams and garlic chilly crab are heaven on earth. Thank you, Pheroza, for bringing Zarathustra to me.

Once upon a time, the Aspen Institute's programs were considered the best in the world. They developed a unique model where heterogeneous groups participated in seminars on Values. The heterogeneity was created by having participants from industry, government, academia, and the media come together. An enormous load of reading material would be sent well in advance, which the course attendees had to go through and make notes on. During the week-long program, the facilitator would assume a 'Socratic' role of only asking questions on the material for the session. Participants would react from their perspective, which would be the opposite of another's, from a different group. The arguments and counter-arguments with the facilitator's coordination would create a fantastic learning experience — not only of the material but also of the logic behind another's opinion, especially as it would be quite different from one's own. The Aspen Institute was set up to create awareness of the world's philosophies and great ideas. Confucius would rub shoulders with Kautilya and Aristotle, with Hobbes and Locke waiting to come in.

In 1995 I was part of Dr. Manmohan Singh's entourage from CII to bring FDI from the USA. I was representing the SMEs. The program was held at the Watergate Hotel in Washington DC, after which some of us were invited to participate in an Aspen program. Jamshyd Godrej, RC Bhargava, Piyush Mankad, Shyamala Kaushik (Charge d'affaires of the Indian Embassy), and me. We were joined by some American participants, and the facilitator was the eminent Phillips Talbot, who had a long connection with India.

After this trailer, we had the real thing at the Taj Holiday Village in Goa, where Jim O'Toole conducted the program. One criticism that came up was the lack of Indian readings. We only had a bit of Kautilya's Arthashastra. Jim added an exciting dimension by announcing that on the final day (Saturday), he would step down, and one of us had to assume the role of the 'Socratic' facilitator. On Friday evening, I was taken aside by Jamshyd and Gopal and informed that the group had selected me to take Jim's place. This began a new phase of learning for me. Jim asked me to select the Indian readings, visit him in the USA, work out the juxtaposition of mine and the Aspen readings, and decide on the sequential flow of the curriculum. Jim became my mentor, guide, and very close friend. His kindness came through when he removed his favorite piece, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, from its prestigious first place, replacing it with my Creation Hymn from the Rig Veda. Aristotle came in second.

Did I meet Jim's high standards? I don't know, but let me share a story that means a great deal to me. However, I must first give you something comparable to set the context.

Ustad Allauddin Khan was arguably India's greatest musician since the legendary Tansen in Emperor Akbar's court. At home, he was the Guru to his son Ali Akbar for the sarod, daughter Annapurna for the surbahar, and friend Uday Shankar's kid brother, Ravi — the sitar. Ali Akbar, like the others, had to practice 12 to 14 hours a day. Of the three, he got the most of the Guru's temper. This went on for years. At some point, he ran away, received the highest honors, and conquered India as one of our very best. He returned home because his father was not keeping well. One day Ali Akbar was doing his usual practice with Allauddin sitting in the verandah outside listening. Normally the son would get a mouthful on all he'd done incorrectly. This one time, there was silence. Ali Akbar put away the sarod and went outside to find Allauddin looking at the sky with tears streaming down his cheeks. Ali Akbar said that no honor or accolade ever given to him from any person or institution could equal his father's tears at his perfect playing that afternoon.

One of my Indian readings was an excerpt from Maggi Lidgi Grassi's Mahabharata. It was the scene at camp in Kurukshetra on the evening after the killing of Drona. Arjuna takes on a very Judaeo-Christian black-and-white ethical posture and harangues Yudhistira for his 'white lie.' Bhima and Drishtadumya defend the 'white lie' with their logic. Satyaki joins in and supports Arjuna. The situation is about to get out of hand when Krishna enters the debate. He explains what is 'Truth' and how it changes from person to person and minute to minute. It's confusing. It's beautiful. It's the ultimate philosophical quandary. The Aspen group in Goa was so caught up in the argument that several calls to end the session and go for lunch were ignored. During this mayhem, I looked at Jim for his reaction. He was sitting in the corner with a wry smile on his face. His non-verbal statement to me was 'well done.' At that moment, I felt exactly what Ali Akbar felt — a great sense of fulfillment at reaching a kind of perfection because of someone whose judgment you trust totally. Jim's wry smile for me was what Allauddin's tears were for Ali Akbar.

Jim never told me he was a Rhodes Scholar. He never shared his glories. He claimed a mixed European ancestry (Irish-Hungarian), with Marilyn being the Mayflower-Brahmin. His humility shone through, and only because I spent a great deal of time with him at home could I gauge the enormous ocean of knowledge that he is. My gratitude was expressed through a trip to Varanasi, where we bumped into cows in the narrowest of lanes and heard a Hindustani Classical music concert at the beautiful Ganges View Hotel in Assi Ghat, where we stayed. We saw the sandhya aarti at Dashaswamedh Ghat and, for excitement, raced like Ben Hur and Messala in two cycle rickshaws from one end of Varanasi to another with Jim, Marilyn, Sushweta, and me — all shouting and exhorting our drivers to go faster.

The Ananda Crucible rests on all that James O'Toole has gifted me in our wonderful times together. Thank you, dear Jim, for being such a warm, loving friend, philosopher, and guide.

I moved from an English public school (called a private school in the USA) with strict discipline enforced through a regimen of punishments, including caning

(there was a frequently used cane rack with a selection of dozen canes in the Head Master's office) to an Australian Jesuit school where there was no punishment. I owe my love for sports to the Aussie priests, including the 'never give up' mentality they instilled in us, with the message that you learn more about life on the games field than in any classroom.

The Founder of the school, Father John Moore SJ, a larger-than-life figure — taught me to look at the bigger picture of changing the world for the better instead of focusing only on narrow self-gratification; Father Michael Doyle SJ (now a householder) — threw out the conventional Ethics syllabus and replaced it with Albert Camus' 'Outsider' and Graham Greene's 'Heart of the Matter' and taught us to be passionate and believe 'its never over till it is over'; Father Kevin Grogan SJ — I remember him holding up Ernest Hemingway's 'Old Man and the Sea' (one of our 5 Senior Cambridge literature texts) and proclaiming this is how we must write the English language, Jane Austen RIP. He taught me to find the element of fun in daily life because otherwise, it's all pointless. Finally, Father Maurice Dullard SJ, a world authority on Saint Ignatius Loyola and the gentlest of persons — gave me a beginner's guide of 3 volumes on the Western Philosophers and showed me the mind's path to exploration of the unknown. And the strangest thing, dear Reader, is that never in all our interactions during and after the school years did we ever discuss Christianity. It was always life in its bigness, multi-dimensional challenges, and excitement at just being. My sincerest thank you to the Boss, Mike, Grog, and Fr Dullard, each of you contributed the parts that make the whole of my thoughts.

And most importantly, the family. My father introduced me to Will Durant's 'Story of philosophy' and later Tagore's metaphysical essays in two slim volumes titled 'Santiniketan.' My mother and all my nutty maternal relatives, whose joie de vivre is in my DNA, have made life rich and abundant. They loved music, art, literature, cinema, photography, wildlife, Nature, good food, sports, and each little thing that adds excitement to living, including trampling every social norm. Maslow's 3rd level never touched my maternal family. If today I'm writing about Innovation as a way of life, it is because all of you have lived it with zest. Thank you for your crazy wonderful inputs.

Rohan and Gorky have given valuable input on their field of passion — Sustainability. They have been my teachers in the new field of Earth Sciences. Thank you both.

Shereen kept me grounded and taught me the power of stillness. Growing up together was a joy. Thank you for creating so much of me.

Sushweta led me into the light with her constant reminders that I was put on earth to write. I refused to listen for the longest time, and then one day I believed and gave in. When writing my immune system is at it's strongest. Viral attacks don't touch me. My energy levels are sky-high and the hours pass by without notice. In this sense, I'm Sushweta's creation. There is also her looking after me with great loving care (gourmet food being an important component), managing my surgery and convalescence, and critiquing each chapter of *The Ananda Crucible* as the book progressed. A thank you is not enough because you are the force behind my creativity.

Donn introduced me to Raghu Kalé. Over the last few months, Raghu's sincerity, intelligence, perceptive powers, and compassionate guidance have helped make The Ananda Crucible a much better experience for you, dear Reader. Thank you, dear Raghu, for your kindness, patience, and caring.

For my research, I thank all those whose books, field studies, and articles I've quoted and mentioned, but especially McKinsey Global Institute, MIT Sloan Management Review, Harvard Business Review, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, The Hindu, Wikipedia, and Google, for magically delivering what I needed exactly when I needed, without my saying so!

I met Malabika in 1970 at IIMC. Over the last 50 plus years she has remained a very close friend and provided enormous Spiritual support when I needed it. On occasions when chinks arrived in my 'eternal optimist' armour, Malabika repaired them and sent me off to live Life good as new. The Ananda Crucible received tremendous support every step of the way from this wonderful dear friend. Thank you.

My gratitude to dear Almas who always believed in the 'Writer' in me and blindly trusted the future would see it blossom.

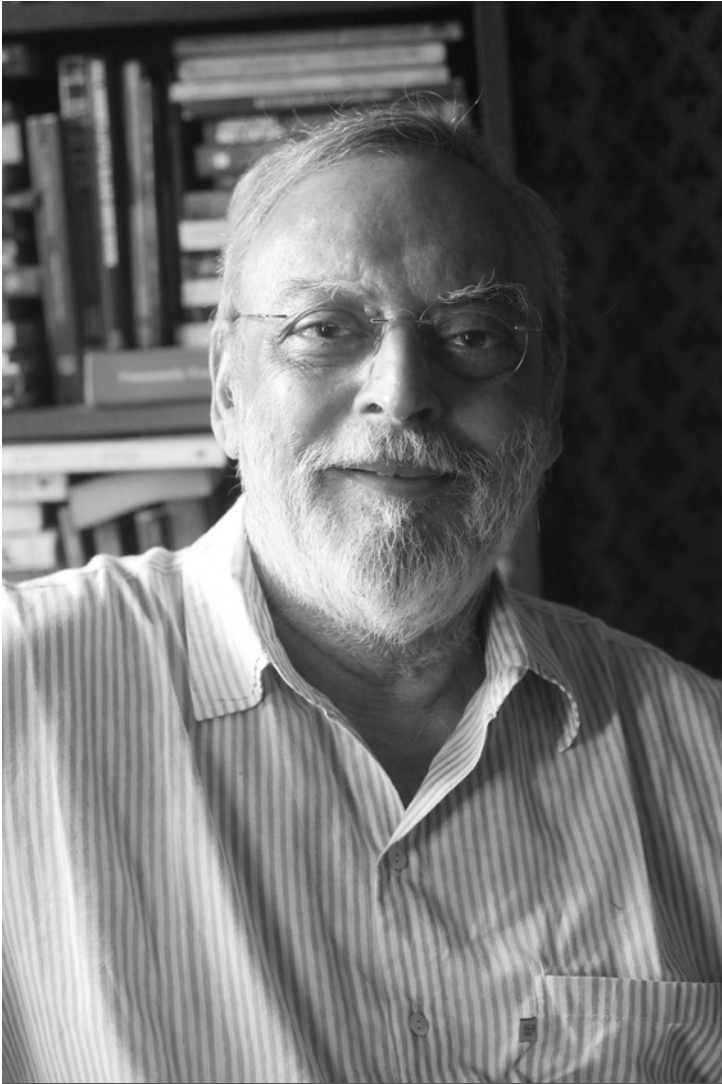
Finally, a big thank you to my Mindfulness Guru — my golf caddy Bappa, who plays to scratch. It's a game I took up five years ago, with a nearly two-year break in between. I've played many sports where the ball swings, bounces, spins, dips, and does funny things — cricket, hockey, tennis, squash, badminton, and table tennis. However, golf - where the ball sits passively unmoving on the grass, is the hardest to master. When I think, I mess up. When I go over the myriad of instructions, I mess up. When I try too hard, I mess up. When I think of consequences, I mess up. It is only when I empty my mind, reach a Zen state, and without thought, swing without extra force, the ball goes exactly where it is supposed to, and I'm in paradise. Krishna's words to Arjuna ring true.

With Bappa's constant urgings, I am progressing on the Mindful path. I always play alone and treat each round as meditative therapy. The lapses are slowly reducing, with the good shots outnumbering the bad. With only a school education, Bappa tells me exactly (word for word) what Jon Kabat-Zinn, Richard Davidson, Daniel Goleman, Abraham Maslow, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Judson Brewer, and Lord Krishna have said about flow — "*Forget everything. Be in the present.*" He is my Baggar Vance, and my dream is to play to 9, which was what Ian Fleming gave James Bond as his golf handicap! We can always dream, can't we?

It's a long acknowledgment, dear Reader. It defines your fireside storyteller's character, persona, and the world that helped create him. This needed spelling out with heartfelt gratitude.

Thank you for traveling with me, and hope you loved the journey. I enjoyed your presence, even in absentia.

Embrace the 21st Century and prosper.



Author's portrait photographed by Rohan Mukerjee in March 2023

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

Gautam Mukerjee is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (IIMC). For the longest time, he has worn two hats with ease — being an entrepreneur and a visiting faculty to some of India's best management institutes and companies.

In his entrepreneurial avatar, Gautam created an operation with 14 branches in India, an office in the UK, and partnerships with firms in Belgium, Denmark, and Italy with exports to Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

In 2017 Gautam withdrew from his organization and focused fully on writing and teaching.

Gautam's teaching began in 1989 at IIMC and expanded to the Tata Management Development Centre (TMDC) and XLRI, where he also served on the Board of Governors.

The high point of his teaching career was being mentored by Professor James O'Toole at the Aspen Institute, Colorado, USA. He was a co-facilitator to Professor O'Toole for Aspen's "*Leadership by Values*" workshops in India.

Gautam is a voracious reader who loves sports, music, cinema, wildlife, Indology, and the study of Consciousness.

Some of his eclectic public teachings are "*The Bhagavad Gita's Modernity*", "*3 dimensions of the Mahabharata*", "*The Story of Jazz*", "*The Story of Rock*," and "*The Story of the Indian Constitution*".

He describes "*The Ananda Crucible: A Business Compass for the 21st Century*" as a wake-up call for organizations around the world to transform and embrace the 21st Century.



AUTHOR'S VOICE — *Why this book?*

We are waking up to the reality of the 21st Century being quite different from the last 100 years. Several factors have changed in Humankind's terra firma.

These changes are creating new Challenges for societies, nations, and organizations. Challenges whose outcomes will define the new Hierarchies of the Future. A Future not too far away.

The Ananda Crucible brings to you these Challenges and the 'Best-in-field' research for each. It is your Compass for traveling the new terrain.

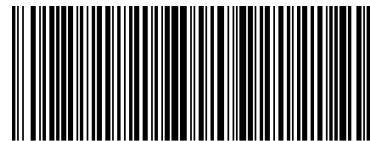
The Journey is to understand how the corporate priority has changed from 'Efficiency' in the 20th Century to 'Innovation' in the 21st.

The 'Innovation' path requires behavioral changes, many of which go against past norms.

- What factors create 'Innovation'?
- What elements from the 20th Century block 'Innovation'?
- Why are Gender and Sustainability so important?
- How do we manage Data and Uncertainty?
- Why is the Community a Stakeholder today?
- What is the real value of organizational Values?
- Can an organization travel to the heights of Human Consciousness where every individual has 'Unlimited Potential'?
- The Ananda Crucible defines all these aspects as the 21st Century Organization.

It is a 'fireside tale' that takes you to Humankind's Future.

— **GAUTAM MUKERJEE**



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