
Somewhere in the year 1996, I remember watching the Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan being interviewed by Simi Garewal. When asked to express his feelings about the success, fame and money that he earned in just 5 career years, Shah Rukh Khan made a very profound statement. "Yes. Money and fame are important to me. But I worked hard not to earn money. All I wanted to do was to produce quality work. Name, fame and money simply followed."

This has perhaps been the most memorable interview that I have ever watched. Inasmuch I understood what Shah Rukh Khan said, I was intrigued and puzzled by the statement. What motivated him? Ever since, I have not only watched his movies and see him grow as an actor, but I have also been immensely impressed to see his wit off screen.

When I read the tagline of this book, the interview I had seen 17 years ago flashed through my mind. Could this book elaborate what Shah Rukh Khan meant? If yes, it would be one more step towards nirvana for me.

That is what this book can do to you. It's power lies in helping you understand what you already know. And it what they say, is enlightenment. There is a lot of literature on success and getting rich, but I recommend this book to all those who seek bliss in their lives.

DRIVE

*The surprising truth about what
motivates us*

Daniel H. Pink

Quotes, Questions and Comments

by

Sarvashreshtha Patel

It's not about money, honey...

"We've always taken the position that money is always something you can lose on. If you don't pay enough, you can lose people. But beyond that, money is not a motivator. What matters are these other features."

This quote by Cannon-Brookes struck me because of the awareness that today, there are quite a number of people in my organisation who were successful engineers, managers or media professionals, but who chose a typically low-paying profession such as teaching. Why, I am also one of them. I believe all these people made this mid-career shift for a greater cause, and in doing so, just ensured that they earned enough to support themselves and their family, not to get rich.

On the other hand, I am also puzzled by one more observation. If that is really the case, if money is not a motivator beyond a certain point, why do most people, despite being rich already, what to be richer still? Why then, even organisations who command more than 90 per cent market share, push their employees for more?

My own philosophy has been that no matter how much you earn, you will always fall short of a few dimes. And this is not rocket science. History has that Alexander chose to cremate himself showing his open arms; that he left it all. Remember the famous 'How much land does a man need?'

Clearly, there must be some wisdom in these anecdotes and fables. That's probably why Cannon-Brookes repeats it again. And the point that he is trying to make is not about money, but those 'other features', chief amongst them is autonomy - the power to work at will.

How often have we been impressed by John McLane? Folks, the movie releases today!!!

Rule no. 1 – No rules.

As Atlassian's experience shows, Type I behavior emerges when people have autonomy over the four T's: their *task*, their *time*, their *technique*, and their *team*.

This quote appears on page 94 of the book, and it is just then that we begin to understand what we already know. Personally, the book became interesting to me after I read this quote. When I reflect upon my greatest achievements in life, I found that the one common element that made these achievements possible was that in doing the task, I had complete freedom to choose the task, the time, the method and the people. In fact, in situation where I did not have autonomy, I underperformed!!

I believe that this is not the case with just me. Anybody reading this is sure to have similar experiences. Think about Edison. He did not invent the bulb because he had to. No organization would have allowed him the time to conduct a thousand experiments in order to invent just a bulb. Of course, he had to choose his own methods; the presence of a prescription, had there already been one would just be counterproductive.

But yes. There are times when autonomy works, and there are times when it won't. We may still have to be delegated a task, follow procedures, meet deadlines and work with people whom we don't like. And these are situations affecting large group of people, or situations that warrant subscription to rites leading to civilization. Take for example, driving in the city traffic.

So at one extreme is an individual who requires complete control in order to function and produce, very much like a machine, and at the other extreme is an individual who has autonomy. I wonder if somebody could delve deeper into how to make this transition and write a book about it!!

Unstoppable.....

The highest, most satisfying experiences in people's lives were when they were in flow....In flow, goals are clear.....Most important, in flow, the relationship between what a person had to do and what he could do was perfect....their sense of time, place and even self melted away.

I have experienced it. And I have experienced it so many times. This is the time when I am so immersed in what I am doing that anything external does not matter. Be it painting, reading a book, preparing a document, teaching my students, writing a lesson plan or a script, playing a musical instrument, going on a long drive even walking or exercise. I just don't want to stop doing what I am doing. The associated feeling is incomparable to any happiness that would accrue as a result of possession, appreciation, or even achievement. The objective that I set to achieve in the first place gets diluted in my immersion of the process. *(That is probably where I conflict. Is that really the case? I agree with goals getting clear, but that happens for me when I put myself out of the experience. In fact, the journey becomes so satisfying for me that the outcome does not matter.)* And yet the final product is something that is of immense value to me, not because of its quality or standard, but on account of the process that produced it.

I am sure every human being has had this blissful experience. I have observed that

happen to so many people – the carpenter who made my furniture, the student working on a project, the teacher teaching the class, the mechanic repairing my scooter and even my wife cooking for me.

But all this is general knowledge. There is nothing new about it. However, the most striking realization comes from the fact that hitherto, I never associated motivation with flow. I never felt that for people to be involved and produce their highest, flow was essential. I guess this is the most prominent difference between Motivation 3.0 and Motivation 2.0.

And this is what I meant when I stated that this book helps us understand what we already know.

How could we as teachers, administrators and leaders create conditions of flow for our students, colleagues, and even for that matter, ourselves?

It's getting better, baby

This is the nature of mastery. *Mastery is an asymptote*. You can approach it. You can home in on it. You can get really, really, really close to it. But like Cezanne, you can never touch it. Mastery is impossible to realize fully.

I really loved the use of an asymptote from something as mundane as algebra to explain something as abstract as mastery. We all begin with a vision of what we want from a project; while working on the project, as we get more and more involved, our vision becomes clearer, more importantly and more often, we raise the bar for ourselves; we just get better and better at what we do, and produce something that we have never imagined to produce. And yet after the accomplishment, an unexplained feeling of dissatisfaction remains. In our next project, we may produce something that surpasses excellence, and yet that feeling remains. That is probably what Daniel Pink means when he says that mastery is impossible to realize fully.

many including myself, believed to be the 'God of Cricket'. He is history's most successful batsman, and it is probably impossible that any other player might surpass his accomplishment. What is said about Sachin is that he never made the same mistake again in his game. It has been 24 career years, he has still not fully retired. He is acknowledged to be a master by all than himself. His learning and mastery is that straight line that a curve approaches, but never reaches. That is the hallmark of a master.

We know it. Yet we get flattered when we are appreciated. But deep inside, we know that there is a long way to go. And it is this awareness that will keep us going. In this state of enlightenment, the idea of needing a carrot or a stick to motivate us seems so absurd!!

One of the best examples that comes to my mind is that of Sachin Tendulkar. He is, by

The mission, is a man.

In other words, they'd reached their goals, but it didn't make them any happier.....even when we do get what we want, it's not always what we need.

This is the culmination of what this book is about and what it may seem to contain for the person who glances through the cover and chooses not to take a dip inside for the simple reason that he might think that the book may not have anything that he does not know.

And it is true. Most people are carried away by extrinsic rewards like money, but these extrinsic rewards are not the ultimate motivators. In fact, we are all acquainted by people who report the emptiness that exists even when they have got everything that they had longed for. It is not difficult to understand why, as Daniel Pink puts it, they get what they wanted, but could never get what they needed.

One big problem that I find with money is that no matter how much you've got, it never feels enough. It may seem that nothing can possibly break this cycle of yearn and earn. However, sometime, somewhere, a person stumbles upon what he was sent to earth for, and when that

happens everything begins to make sense, and as a person sets foot on this journey there is no looking back.

Sometimes, it takes a lifetime for people to identify what they need, but even though they become boomers, they report a boost in their energy and productivity as they stumble live their lives with a deep sense of purpose.

This is not to say that nothing else matters. In fact, most people begin to pursue their purpose only after they've got enough to sustain themselves and their families. Running after money does not make you a lesser human being; it just renders you an incomplete human being. As the author puts it earlier, profit is the catalyst, not the motivator.