THE SUICIDE

A MANS LIFE TRANSFORMING QUEST IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS AND PERSONAL MASTERY

LETTER TO THE READER

Dear reader,

First, congratulations on grabbing this book. By doing so, you have displayed a sense of purpose and willingness to make use this wonderful gift called life to the fullest extent by working on the most beautiful thing in the world - yourself.

“Success is a pilgrimage taken by everyone but completed only by few.”

There are 8 billion of our species on this planet, with each of us differing in a wide variety of factors such as genes, nationality, religion etc…But despite all these differences, there is one common universal purpose that unites the entire human race – The need to be successful.

Though the definition of success differs from person to person- for one, success maybe bare survival while for another, it may be making it to the fortune 500 list; for one it might mean making it to Harvard while for another it might be attending to school at least once in their lifetime; For one it might be visiting the Disney land while for another it might be breathing long enough to live for one more day. But no matter what the individual definition is, all of us are in the same boat as we wake up each day, trying to make progress, trying to move our boat towards the shore of success.

Early man started off as nomads, wandering through the forests of present day Africa in search of food. As time progressed, humankind evolved. Many new discoveries were made and along with those discoveries, new questions emerged. The answer to these questions presented a fresh set of questions. Over time, this cycle of problems and progress did wonders to man. No longer is he travelling by foot. The distance between the moon and earth doesn’t deter him anymore. Gone were the days when mankind was created – now mankind is the creator himself. The creations of mankind have helped him transgress the finite boundaries of space and explore the vast infinity that lies beyond.

But no matter how much the progress, there are some questions, for which the answers have always eluded man. It is in the quest of answers to those questions, that mankind stumbled upon some of the greatest gifts it has ever discovered in the manner of spiritual and technological innovations. One such question is the “secret of success”.

Billions of men have walked on this planet but only a notable few have left their imprints on the sands of time. Only a certain percentage of the total population that embarked on the journey of achieving their dreams and attaining happiness managed to do it. But what is it that those people had that the rest didn’t have? What did those people do that if the rest can implement in their lives, eventually they too can complete the ‘mission possible’ of success?

So what are the secrets of success and happiness? What is the formula to success and happiness (if there is any at all)? There is no one size fits all answer to these questions. But In the pursuit of answers to these questions, there have been quite a few discoveries, which if we implement in our personal voyage of excellence, makes the rocky road to success easier to tread on.

I hope that this book, which is about one man’s pursuit of answers, will be the igniting spark that will help you in your personal journey towards happiness and excellence and I also wish that this journey of yours called life will be the story that will inspire the billions that are yet to set foot on this planet.

Looking forward to serving you to the best of my abilities to equip you with all that I have ever known about making this journey of yours a worthwhile one. Wishing you happiness, peace of mind, self-satisfaction, good health, immense wealth and a place in the history books,

Your admirer,

Vignesh Karthikeyan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Though there have been many people behind the scenes whose constant motivation, inspiration and support is the reason behind the pages to come and to those people I owe an debt that can never be re payed, there is one person in particular to whom I would like to dedicate this book – the person who appears when you stand in front of the mirror. That is the person who knows the entirety of you, including your darkest secrets and the happiest of reminiscence. To that person I dedicate this book because I’m sure that as he/she leads you along the pathway of life, this book will give them the most humble remainders that will help them make this journey a worthwhile one.

# CHAPTER -1 |

***THE FALL…***

It was 6 pm. Savin took out the steel lunch box from his bag and opened it with the expectations of a child that was about to get a toy from its parents. Lunch at last! He exclaimed. One look into the lunch box and that child like face turned into the face of a kid who just received his homework. Upma!\* He growled. Like a typical south Indian kid, Savin hated upma. His repulsion towards upma roots from his childhood days. But in those days unlike today, lunch was a thing of norm and not a privilege that seems to be getting harder with each passing day.

Suddenly the phone blared. It was Sahadev. He wanted to meet Savin immediately. Savin frowned as he put the phone down. Now he had to choose between upma and his boss (both of whom he equally detested) - he decided to dump the upma and go for the boss instead. He made a silent apology to his stomach as he made his way to Sahadev’s cabin. I will go for the dinner directly. At least it’s not going to be upma again – he thought to himself, trying to focus the positive side of a day that seemed to be getting worse.

To temporarily satisfy his stomach he grabbed a coffee at the cafeteria and hurried to Sahadev’s cabin only to realize that something even worse than upma was lurking inside the cabin. Sahadev was Savin’s manager and the reason for

The phone call was that Sahadev wanted to do Savin’s year-end review immediately. Savin dreaded those words…he knew what that meant. It meant for the next one hour Sahadev was going to be blasting Savin, ripping apart whatever he had done for the entire year. They should have named it ‘your-end review’ instead of ‘year-end review’, he thought as he occupied the dreaded seat opposite to his boss.

True enough, for the next one hour, Sahadev blasted through Savin in a manner similar to how Australian cricket team would perform against the present Chinese cricket team (with Savin playing the role of Chinese cricket team). Savin could not even find out which was louder – the sound of his stomach growling or Sahadev’s blasting. Not that Savin was a bad performer – In fact, Savin had passed out from one of the leading engineering colleges in India and the company in which he at the present was working for was the first company that came to his college and Savin was the only person who got selected; But what went in Sahadev’s cabin was like the universal code of conduct for all year-end reviews. After the 1 hour blast, which ended with Savin making a promise to Sahadev about correcting his mistakes (which included ideas like coming to office early, taking additional responsibilities and staying back extra time to work more on his core competencies) and thanking him for pointing out his ‘areas of improvement’ in a ‘very friendly way’, Savin came out of Sahadev’s cabin with his stomach growling. Time for home and dinner finally! , he cried.

Savin switched off his system, took his helmet and got ready to leave when the mobile phone rang. It was Vinithra, Savin’s wife. She said she was too tired and needed a break. So she was leaving to her parent’s ancestral home in kumbakonam – (a traditional village in the interior of south India) for a week and that Savin had to take care of their daughter Mira. ‘Don’t buy food from the hotel’ she said. ‘Mira is allergic to hotel food. So better you cook for yourself and Mira’. She continued...’and for tonight’s dinner, eat something on your way. Mira had noodles’…She then proceeded to give a series of instructions before leaving Savin with a take care and good bye. Savin sighed as he put back his cell phone. He was mentally and physically exhausted. At 7pm, he was wondering if it could get anymore worse. Now at 9 pm, he felt the life at 7pm was much better.

Savin was a 27 year old Indian engineer from Chennai. He completed his schooling and like every Indian kid who completes high school, joined engineering in one of the reputed institutions in the country. He was an above average child who always managed to stay afloat in the top part almost throughout his school life. Savin worked hard in his high school. After finishing high school, following the guidance of his parents, he decided to pursue engineering and got into one of the premier engineering institutions in the city.

Engineering was different. Unlike school, his managing to stay afloat tactics didn’t work here. In fact, within the first two months of engineering, he failed more times than he had ever failed in his 17 years of school life. One year into engineering, Savin realized that he did not belong here. But like a majority of Indian engineers, Savin too had no options and was left with no other alternative than to struggle his way out of the Indian engineering system. But as they say, what doesn’t kill you only makes you stronger and Savin did more than just surviving – he thrived. 4 years of effort paid off in his final placements in which he got a job in a popular IT company based in Chennai..

Though Savin was everything on the outside that an average middle class kid would want to be – graduated engineer, had a well-paying job, married to a beautiful woman and having a lovely little kid; hidden away from the perfect guy image which the society had of him, there was another Savin - A Savin who was tattered. He hated his job. What should have ideally been profession for passion, had become profession for paycheck. His wife seemed to be caring less about him with each day. His boss seemed to be wanting more from him day by day. In short, the Savin on the outside was just a makeup.

And on that fateful day, the inner Savin – the one that he had been managed to successfully conceal from the outside world for so long, reached its maximum threshold. Savin took the keys of his bike, left the office and started driving towards his home. Suddenly, it was no longer his stomach growling but his mind and heart.

Unable to hold it together any longer, Savin stopped his bike and looked at the railway track adjoining the road. He could see a train coming in the distance. A thought flashed through Savin’s mind. ‘This is it’ he said. ‘I’m done…’ He got down from his bike and started running towards the train track. He wanted to end the pain once in for all. He could no longer stand it. With overflowing emotions, he raced towards the railway track as thoughts of his wife, Mira, Sahadev and his friends ran through his mind. Maybe they will realize my value when I’m gone, he thought.

The poor loco pilot, who saw an approaching Savin, understood what he was trying to do. He desperately tried to stop the train but in vain…The train was running at a high speed and was too close to Savin for the driver to do anything. The loco pilot screamed in horror as within a fraction of a second Savin jumped in front of the train.

Savins body came in front of the train...But Savin had slightly mistimed the jump which resulted in him falling on the track a few seconds earlier than he would have wanted to. The loco pilot realized that his train was about to run over Savin’s body. But was helpless as he stood stunned, forced to become the god of death’s unvolunteered coachman for a few seconds.

# CHAPTER -2|

***REVELATIONS…***

But the train did not run over Savin. In fact, he did not even land on the track. As his mortal body neared the track, Savin realized that there was a large hole in the middle of the rails and he was jumping right into it. In a moment, Savin’s body dropped into the hole. He lost his conscious as his body continued sailing into the hole which kept getting bigger and bigger…

It was not clear when Savin hit the ground or for how long stayed unconscious but when he woke up, he was about to experience something that he would have never imagined even in his dreams.

A sharp pain in the forehead brought Savin back to consciousness. He looked around to find himself inside a white room with a few paintings around. One of those paintings drew his attention. There was something about it that gave him a very familiar feeling. He remembered having seen that painting somewhere. In fact, Savin realized that none of the paintings were new to him. There was a sense of familiarity in all of them. He felt an indescribable bond with those paintings but he just couldn’t figure out what that bond was.

Outside the room there a small boy was playing with train toy set. As Savin peeped through the window and looked at him, he instantaneously felt a distinct sense of familiarity. He had seen that boy somewhere. The smile in his face, the happiness that he expressed through it – there was something about him that brought within Savin a strange feeling. The boy reminded Savin of something that he had lost long ago. But he was not sure what it was.

“You can’t find something if you don’t what you lost in the first place”

– Savin heard a voice from the back. He turned around to find a well-built man around the age of 60.

“Who are you?” He asked. “And where am I? What is this place? How did I get here?”

“These are questions that you should be asking yourself”, the man replied. “It was you who chose to come here”.

Savin thought the old man was crazy…”What do you mean? I didn’t choose to come here. I was trying to end my life by jumping in front of a running train and now I find myself here…”

“That eventually means you chose to come here isn’t it?”

“Didn’t you hear what I said? I just mentioned that I didn’t choose to come here…I wanted to end my life and somehow I’m here now…Please stop playing with me and answer my question…tell me what is this place…”

The old man replied, “I’m not playing. You see…”

**You can’t just choose your actions…The consequences of your action – you have to own up for them too…**

So when you say you made the choice to jump in front of the train, you invariably agreed to whatever was going to happen after you jumped in front of the train.

***While you can’t choose the consequence of your actions, you are the inevitably their owner. They are as a result of a choice you voluntarily made.***

So you mean to say that I voluntarily chose to come to a place I don’t even know? Are you crazy?

“You are normal but what’s the use? All that you managed to do is try ending your life and in that process land in an unknown place…And it’s no wonder that you tried to commit suicide…your mind is too focused on the problems and not on finding a way out…”

Savin remained silent.

The old man continued…

Think about it…is the question of how you came here more really important. Or are you supposed to be asking how you’re going to get out of here?

Savin realized that the old man was right.

You’re right, he said to the old man…Now tell me, how do I get out of here?

Shouldn’t you be asking that to the person who brought you in?

“You crazy old man…can you stop blabbering and tell me how to get out of…”

Besides, you know this place inside out right? These pictures…that kid outside…the old man continued.

Savin stopped on hearing these words. The old man was actually right. Though he was not sure what happened after he jumped on the track and he had never seen this place where he had landed before, the old man was right. None of the things here looked new to him. In fact, they all had a distinct aurora of familiarity on them .He could feel a sense of inexplicable closeness in everything that was around him at that moment - the painting of the astronaut, the face of the child and on top of it all, there was something about the old man – how did he know the sense of familiarity that Savin was experiencing about this place?

Who are you? Savin asked the old man. What is this place?

The old man smiled. My name is Savin he said. I’m the Savin that could have been. And you asked me how to get out of here right? I’m going to tell you the way

‘Savin that could have been? I don’t understand…anyways, I already have too much of problems to care about and so I’m not going to bother about this. Just tell me the way out’.

It is the same as you came in!

You mean suicide?

Yes

What? You mean I need to try and commit suicide again to get out of this place?

Yes…

Savin began to wonder if this was all really happening to him. What started off with him wanting to end the pain had now brought him more confusion. His first suicide attempt was a failure and brought him here and now the old man wants him to do another one. At that moment he wished he had checked on the track before jump onto it

You’re going to have to commit suicide to get out of this place…but this is going to be a different kind of suicide – one that will not end but rather bring you back to life…

How’s that possible?

That’s what I’m here for. The old man said as he grabbed hold of Savin’s hand and dragged him outside the room towards the kid playing outside.

Hey! Where are you taking me? Enough of this! Just let me go! Savin tried to pull his hands out the man’s grip but the old man was really strong. Like a mother dragging her child to study, the Old man dragged a struggling Savin towards the baby. Upon approaching the baby, the old man stopped and looked at Savin. Savin looked back at the old man. And then he looked at the young child…

As he stared deeper into the child’s round eyes and dark eyeballs, a realization dawned upon Savin in a flash of a second. The child’s face looked just like his own. Every action that the child made - the shake of hand, the laugh, the wide open mouth Savin felt like he was doing it himself. In fact, he could feel a strange feeling about his body as he stared at the child. As the child playfully held out its arm, Savin touched it. At that moment, a strange wave swept through him. In an instant his whole body vibrated…and then a realization dawned upon him- As he stared into the dark eyeballs of the child, he realized that he was looking at a younger version of himself.

Savin could not believe this. At that instance, he removed his hand from the child’s hand and looked with an expression of shock at the old man. The old man smiled at Savin.

The old man smiled wisely at Savin as he placed his hands on Savin’s frightened shoulders.

Is that…is that..m..me?

Yes…that is indeed you…that’s the child you with small eyes that saw limitless hope and infinite possibilities; with dreams of becoming an astronaut and changing the world one day, with a heart that had utmost belief in its future self. .