

Have you ever attempted to drive a car with no enough air in its tires?

Although It's controllable, however, that is not the best. If just leave the tires underinflated, you are at risk of permanently ruining your vehicle. If you have a flat tire –or two or three –it will be impossible for your car to function.

Why are we talking about a car? Gaur Gopal Das the author of this book wants us to consider our lives just like a motor vehicle, backed up by four main parts– the existential correspondent of four tires.

Those parts are your personal life, relationships, work-life and social contribution. Therefore, if you want to reach anyplace, you can't ignore the steering wheel which is your spiritual life.

**It is not often easy to feel grateful; however, it is essential to a happy personal life.**

The author has a friend and his friend's daughter was meant to die.

Gandharvika was just four years and six months old when she was diagnosed with Burkitt's lymphoma which is a destructive, fast-rising cancer. That type of disaster can disrupt a life.

However, in spite of having a lot of reason to despair, both her mother as well as her father not for once lost vision of life's gifts. Friends and family came in, rendering support like prayer and cancer-treatment payments. However the unlucky parents could have cursed their fortune, rather they decided to be grateful for what they had which is supportive friends and family.

The first main key to getting a healthy and happy persona life is Gratitude. The human mind is indeed susceptible to get engrossed in the disturbing and frustrating things in life. However, if you ever see yourself thinking of how to be grateful, consider the Gandharvika's family, whose calamity didn't take away their gratitude.

That doesn't mean it is easy to be grateful. Gratitude is something that needs to be cultivated. The author recommends having a gratitude log. Use ten minutes of your time daily to jot down

the things you're grateful for, even if they're as minor as a smile from an unknown person on the bus.

This practice will enable you to identify what you need to be grateful for and to also remember it.

After you've written these two Rs, the next thing is to give back. Endeavor to look for a manner to give back to people in your own personal life.

This is an easy practice for doing that. Remember the last day. Within that time, find three to five people or experiences that you're grateful for. Afterward, look for manners in which you can show your gratitude – for instance, thanking your partner for cooking a delicious meal.

Try this every week, and you'll be on the right path to living a life full of gratitude, and hence having a filled, healthier and happier personal life.

## In order to balance your personal life, you need to stop worrying and nurture your spirituality.

Are you aware of the story of Brian Acton the WhatsApp's creator?

His life changed in 2007 when he decided to embark on a journey with his friend Jan Koum. Acton was working hard for the past 12 years, at first, he was working for Apple and later on for Yahoo. A year in South America seemed like the perfect break.

When he and Koum returned, they couldn't get a job. They were both rejected by Facebook and Twitter. This is where Acton has a thing to teach us. He wasn't bothered about the rejections. He continued with his life, tweeting upbeat messages on Twitter, like "can't wait for the next life's journey."

Less than 10 years after in 2014, he sold WhatsApp to Facebook for a huge sum of \$19 billion!

What is the moral of the story? We shouldn't worry about things we can't control. Acton wasn't able to control the employing decisions at Twitter or Facebook. However, he could control his reaction to rejection. Eventually, his calmness was worth it.

The author loves to display to people a flowchart. It begins with a question: “Do I have an issue?” If the reply to the question is no, then why stress? But if the answer to the question is yes, then there’s also another question: “Can I do something about the issue?” If the answer to the question is yes, why should you worry? Then if the answer is no, why should you worry?

All the entire arrows to this chart leading to “why worry?” –combines the spiritual principle of detachment with clarity.

If you can address your problem, that means you don’t actually have a problem. If you can’t do something about it, then you don’t have a problem since the problem is beyond your control. Now, this doesn’t mean you shouldn’t try to address the problems you are facing. However, if there is really nothing you can do– like when Twitter and Facebook rejected Acton’s job applications – there’s no need in wasting your time worrying.

Additional, in order to improve your personal life you have to cultivate your spiritual practice. The author reminds us that we are spiritual beings. That doesn’t mean he encourages any one god. Rather, he inspires us to connect to “our God ” –meaning, the oneness that the entire gods signify. Seeking this connection will enable us to spread love to others and to ourselves.

This can be done through medication. Das prefers mantra meditation, which involves reciting meaningful or holy words. For example, the author repeats the name of God. Also, meditation has countless practical advantages like it relieves stress and it fills us with a sense of purpose.

A healthy spiritual life and avoidance of worry should make up for your personal life and equip you to challenge the next part: relationships.

## In order to develop your relationship which is the second part of your life, you need to look at yourself.

There was a couple, husband and wife. The wife regularly gave disapproving comments about the cleanliness of their neighbors’ clothes. Anytime their neighbor hung their cloth to dry after laundry, the wife would look at it and talk about the dirtiness.

One day, the wife saw from the window and was surprised. The clothes were very clean! She assumed that someone else did their laundry for them. That's when the husband told her that he cleaned the window that early morning.

When you see other people, what type of window are you looking at them from? Before you can really perfect the second key part of life-relationships –you need to take a look at yourself.

The author mentions five different kinds of people, each with their own manner of seeing others.

The Type-1 people see no good in others. Maybe because of jealousy or insecurity, those type of people only see the bad, and they regularly extend the negative qualities they see. Those people wouldn't even see the laundry as clean even after their windows have been cleaned.

Type-2 people can see some good and some bad; but, they concentrate on the bad. Incredible things may be occurring within them; however, they discount them in favor of bad things.

Type-3 people are similar to the type-2 –however, instead of concentrating on the bad, this type is uninterested to either bad and good. They basically have no interest.

Type-4 people can identify both good and bad, however, they don't concentrate on the bad. Since it's normal for humans to get hung up on life's bad sides, those types of people have to give a great deal of work. However, this work can protect relationships and develop decision-making.

Let's use the case of Aditya Birla the CEO of multibillion-dollar company Hindalco Industries, who doesn't simply give in to the need to lecture employees. He creates a list of an employee's good skills first and this enables him to gain perception and calm his anger. This is a type-4 method in action.

Lastly, there's type-5. These people are very uncommon. They do not see any bad at all. If they see a bit of good, they hold onto it and enlarge it. Such a way to life is merely possible for the most enlightened people– and, certainly, for the majority of us, it wouldn't be practical.

We ordinary humans should aim to become type-4 people. If we can accomplish that, we'll be on the path to improving our relationships.

## You need to be cautious when providing constructive feedback, and learn to cultivate forgiveness.

How can we turn into a type-4 person, who is a person that is aware of both bad and good, but decides to concentrate on the good in people and offer them with kindness and respect?

The first thing is to be conscious of how we talk to others, particularly when it comes to providing constructive feedback.

You are aware of the saying that goes thus, “Sticks and stones can break my bones but words will never hurt me?” No piece of received wisdom has ever been less accurate. Words are like weapons and they can cause emotional wounds that take several years to heal.

Therefore, before you state something crucial, you need to ensure that it is proper by asking yourself these four questions.

Firstly, “Am I the exact person to provide corrective feedback?” If the person you’re about to give this feedback to is someone you don’t know or know well, it best not to talk.

But, if the person is a close friend or a member of your family; you may go on to question two, which is, Do I have the right reason to provide corrective feedback? Most times, we criticize people, not because we want what is good for, but because we’re annoyed with them or we hold some grudges against them.

Don’t use criticism as a type of vengeance. If you’re certain that this isn’t what you are doing, you need to ask yourself, “Do I know the correct approach to offer corrective feedback?” Know that: it’s not about what you say but it is how you say it. Criticizing others is a crucial issue. Don’t frown and shout. When providing feedback, ensure that your facial expression, tone, and gestures are calm and kind.

Finally, ask yourself, “Is this a good time?” For example, if your partner has just spent hours making dinner, that might be the wrong time to say the food is badly underseasoned. Talk about it later and have a positive discussion, instead of hurting the feelings of your partner’s.

Forgiveness is also another essential part of relationships. One method to develop your ability to forgive is to detach the person from the matter. Instead of thinking “it is my problem,” which can lead to long-term feelings of guilt, or “it is your problem,” which can make us very angry with others, think “it is the problem.” This splitting of a problem from a person will enable you to face the problem positively and avoid putting the blame, which will then make you extend forgiveness.

**Competition is a normal aspect of the workplace –however, you have to nurture healthy competition and evade unhealthy competition.**

Now that you’ve both your personal life and your relationships in order, it’s time to concentrate on the next part of life which is work. As you are definitely aware that the workplace can be competitive. It is not bad to have competition. However, if you want to have a happy work life, it’s essential to know the difference between healthy competition and unhealthy competition.

Let’s begin with a great instance of the latter.

The author friend called Jaymin was formerly working as a photographer at a globally known magazine. Jaymin was both gifted and trusted and had been given a huge deal of liberty by the magazine’s HR director. He could sort out his schedule anyhow he like.

But, the stylist on Jaymin’s team was jealous of this freedom and also wanted Jaymin’s job. Therefore, she tried to damage his work, secretly deleting his photo backups. Jaymin caught her red-handed the fifth time she attempted that.

Here’s the plot. The HR manager was also jealous of Jaymin as well. Therefore, when Jaymin reported what the stylist had done, the manager didn’t interfere. Rather, he and the stylist said to the director that Jaymin was unskilled and a liar.

Eventually, the truth came out that Jaymin hadn't been lying. The director pleaded with him not to go, however, Jaymin was done. He didn't want any part in such a workplace that had toxicity and he decided to have his own studio.

This is the type of malicious, envy-fueled competitiveness that does nothing but hurt. How can one compete in a healthy manner, then?

The key thing is self-competition. You shouldn't compete with other people, wishing for their belongings or power or opportunity. You have to do that with yourself.

Let's use the example of actor Matthew McConaughey, who expressed concisely his exemplary manner to competition in an Oscar-acceptance speech back in the year 2014.

He said he was asked at the age of 15 who his hero was. He replied after thinking and said, "It's me in ten years." A decade after, the exact person questioned him if he'd become a hero. The 25-year-old McConaughey said, "I'm not even close to that— because my hero's me when I turn 35."

Competing with yourself instead of others won't only dismiss the feelings of insecurity and jealousy; it will also encourage you to do your best all the time, on your terms, and therefore enable you to attain your maximum professional potential.

**The Japanese version of ikigai can enable you to determine your purpose, as can loving the things you do and doing the things you love.**

The idea of self-competition is very direct. However, before you can begin successfully competing with yourself and achieving your potential, you'll need to identify your purpose. If this seems like a frightening task, don't worry, there's a Japanese version that can enable the process to be as easy as A, B, C.

Ikigai is a Japanese term that nearly means “reason to live.” It’s a model that has four parts, each signifies an important question. These questions are: What are the things you love? What are you good at doing? What does the world require? And what can you get money for?

You’ll attain ikigai when you are capable of answering each of these parts in equal measure, hence answering each question adequately. Anything less than that will leave you feeling incomplete.

For example, let’s assume that you are doing what you love, it’s something you’re very good at doing, and the world requires you to do it –however, you’re not getting money for it. In this sense, you’ll be nearly fulfilled, however, you’ll possess an irritating feeling of uselessness. Similarly, let’s assume you are getting money for doing what you love, and the world requires you to do it –however, let’s be honest, you’re not good at it. In this case, your pleasure will be ruined by a sense of uncertainty.

Endeavoring toward ikigai is a reliable manner to get a sense of purpose. But, it’s simpler to begin working your way toward this perfect state when you’re still young with time and flexibility to create career pivots. However, what if you think it’s extremely late to reach the perfect balance of ikigai?

If you already have a career, an area of expertise and steady pay –there are two easy things you can do to have more sense of purpose. First, you need to begin by loving what you do. Nevertheless, your job possibly uses approximately 80% of your time; if it’s not the job you dream of, that’s 80% of your time devoted to a job you don’t love. Therefore, start concentrating on the areas you actually love.

Secondly, you can begin doing what you actually love. You still have the other 20% of your time—so why not dedicate this time to doing something you really love doing! Instead of window shopping or going for dinner at another classy restaurant, start doing meaningful activities like giving to a worthy environmental organization.

## You need to be selfish in order to be selfless; however, giving a social contribution will bring joy.

We've now gotten to the last part of life which is a social contribution – and that means it's time to question yourself if you are ice cream or a candle. This is probably a confusing question. You possibly didn't know that each one has its own viewpoint.

The viewpoint of the ice cream is this: enjoy your life before it dissolves. Meaning, this icy treat, however delicious, has a hedonistic manner to life, placing personal enjoyment above everything else.

On the other hand, the candle takes a different manner. Its viewpoint is to provide light to others before it dissolves. By nature, it provides to those surrounding it, selflessly lighting the world for the advantage of others.

In all possibility, you're most likely neither all candle nor all ice cream; you are perhaps in between. However, the first step toward social contribution is to ensure that your goal is to be less like ice cream and mostly like that of a candle. The aim of life is to provide to others.

However, you might think that why have all the other chapters been about refining your life? You can't assist others till you've helped yourself first. If you've ever been on a plane, you know about following emergency-situation instructions: use your own oxygen mask first before assisting others with theirs; the main thing is if you lose consciousness, you won't be able to assist anybody.

Meaning, you need to be selfishly selfless. You can't offer without thinking about yourself. Remember: all four parts of life need to be in balance.

With that being said, you can't provide either. If you don't give, you'll also be out of balance. Therefore, how should you begin?

It's better to start with your family. A lot of people give contributions outside their home –for instance, giving to charity or volunteering –however, they don't help those closest to them. How

can you assist the people you love both physically and emotionally? It's simply after you have cared and supported your family that you can look beyond it.

However, you definitely should give beyond the house, too. In Sanskrit, the term for service is seva. Nurturing seva might mean serving the environment, supporting your community or serving your country, for instance, working in the armed forces.

If you practice seva after balancing the other parts of your life, you're guaranteed to have a life of joy.

## Life's Amazing Secrets: How to Find Balance and Purpose in Your Life by Gaur Gopal Das Book Review

There are four essential parts in the life of humans which are personal lives, work lives, relationships, and social contributions. Those parts are similar to the wheels of a car; they have to be balanced and catered for if we need to have a straight life journey. Spirituality is similar to wheel steering and this part can be cultivated by meditating. Once your tires are balanced and once you are in charge of the wheel, you'll be on the path to a joyful and rewarding life.

Good action, good intention, a good mood.

It's essential to question why and how we're helping others when doing social contributions. Therefore, before you take part in any mindless kindness, you have to ask yourself these three questions. The first question is, is it a good action? The notion here is that you shouldn't behave in a manner that doesn't fit with your spiritual values. The second question is, do you have a good intention? Giving is not essentially about receiving. If you see yourself waiting to be rewarded or respected for your support, verify your intention. The third question is, are you generous with the correct mood? If you're giving out because you "need to," the answer is no. A social contribution needs to be from the depths of the heart.

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