

FORCENET

E-ZINE

Magazine for military veterans in the corporate
July 2022, Volume IV, Issue 07

Major Ved Prakash Sharma (Retd)

CEO & Co-Founder
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FORCENET

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Role of agriculture in growth of Indian economy and overall development has been significant. We have managed to overcome the great humiliation of food aid during 1960s and now become a food surplus nation. This role needs to be re-oriented in the light of changing environment, requirements and new challenges. This requires a quantum shift in our approach from “incremental change” to “transformational change”. ***In our assessment at Forces Network, data and connectivity revolution beckons agriculture!*** Agriculture especially in India is in for a long due revolution. And, now is the right time to enter this sector if you wish to ride the upcoming boom.

Hence, this month we have selected the theme as '**Transforming for Tomorrow: AgriTech**'. As per McKinsey, successful implementation of connectivity in agriculture alone could tack on \$500 billion in additional value to the global gross domestic product by 2030. Agriculture contributes to 15% of India's GDP but employs a disproportionate 43% of the Indian workforce. This is a structural flaw, we need to release this workforce for other sectors by using automation and technology. To feed the growing global population, estimates suggest we will have to increase food production by as much as 68 percent by 2050.

Past, technology advances in agriculture have centred around mechanical and genetic means. Widespread adoption of technology through digital platforms, analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML) and the Internet of Things (IoT) is critical towards transforming agriculture. India's burgeoning start-up ecosystem has been actively playing its part in disrupting the agriculture sector. AgriTech start-ups are operating in an attractive market with an estimated potential of US\$24b by 2025.

Business models in the AgriTech space are still evolving. We encourage our members to enter this sector especially as job creators. Technology has always been at the core of Forces Network. We would suggest that those entering this sector enter it with a fresh mindset armed with tech tools. The outcomes are likely to be outsized returns. One also needs to consider the new avenues of Precision agriculture, Farm management, Quality management, traceability in the agro sector & efficient post-harvest supply. We are showcasing one such Forces Network entrepreneur in this Issue working in this domain. Hope that will inspire many others.



Until next time, cheers to Forces Network – **“the Network that works”**.

Jai Hind

Technologically yours,

Capt Rajesh Nair

Featuring our Happy Readers.

RADHIKA GUPTA

I've watched with interest how Col Sanjeev Govila and his company, Hum Fauji Initiatives, have worked over time to spread financial literacy in the armed forces over the past many years. This book is a step in the right direction. Best wishes to this yeoman service and their tireless efforts.



LT GEN ATA HASNAIN(RETD)

I'm sure this book will prove to be a landmark in the personal finance field and help a huge number of armed forces officers and civilians alike in leading a safe, bountiful and meaningful retired life. I would go to the extent of saying that no armed forces officer should retire without reading this book!!



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[A NOTE FOR THE READERS](#)

This is an interactive e-magazine, with active links on many pages, including the advertisements, which can be used by just tapping/clicking on them.

For the ease of providing a feedback, such links have been provided at the end of the articles too.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed within this e-magazine are the personal opinions of the authors and interviewees. The facts and opinions appearing in the articles thus do not reflect the views of Forces Network, and Forces Network does not assume any responsibility or liability for the same.



Letters To The Editor

"Letters to Editor" are open letters written by readers to the editor with their views on the last edition's article or writing about their experience. Readers are motivated to write their thoughts and send it across to us.

Feedback on

Seeking Better: The Defining Paradigm of Forces Network

The article highlights well, the ethos of Forces Network that has maintained its founding principles rather well over the years. I can say this with conviction, having been a member of ForceNet from its earliest years. Personally speaking, Col Iqbal is a role model for me and an exemplification of this piece that he has written himself. I have always drawn inspiration from his go-getter attitude and continuously reinventing himself regardless of his already flush skill-set. A forward looking article- to say the least.



*Lt Col Ravi Kant Joshi
(Retd)*

Feedback on

Seeking Better: The Defining Paradigm of Forces Network

The quest for seeking better than we are is the single most important definition of human existence.

Iqbal Sir brings in the point straight from the heart that positive dissatisfaction is a step ahead in the evolutionary process. ABCT is an amazing program with lot of potential. There is nothing what the Forces people cannot do as a matter of fact.



*Maj Rajat
Chakraborty*

I have been a constant admirer of Col Iqbal and get to learn a lot from him, always. Taking forward his beliefs in the Veterans capabilities, I too believe that the Veterans have the capability to become amazing business leaders and entrepreneurs, and not in jobs alone.

A comprehensive program that helps transitioning officers to become entrepreneurs instead of jobs alone can be the next paradigm for the Forces Networks community.

Forces Network Members Benefit By Attending the Google VetNet Week 2022



The Google Veterans Network (VetNet) organized a virtual three-day VetNet Career Week from 21-23 Jun 2022. It offered veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses/partners across the globe the tools, support, and advice needed to establish and advance their careers. It was a free event. The details about the event were announced in the Forces Network well in advance to enable members to register and book their event seats. Several members of Forces Network greatly benefited from the Event. It helps when your Founder is a Googler!

Some of them shared their feedback in Forces Network.

Feedback From A Few Members Who Attended

From Col Amit Dalvi (ret'd)

1. I attended the VetNet events all throughout. It was a good education. Thank you very much. Without your input, me as well as many others, would not have known about it. I have listed a few random points, as I perceived.

2. Plus Points:-



(a) Process: It served as an eye opener in more than one aspect. I shall give just one example. Right from the registration and subsequent follow up, everything was totally well managed. The Google calendar invite had the Google Meet link plus all required details.

(b) Culture: The corporate work ethics at the US were explained sometimes directly, on other instances as implied insights.

(c) Networking: Power of networking was evident even within the panelists. Something which we have here, was seen. For example, a lady entrepreneur, who ventured into education or school vertical, openly acknowledged how she turned around her failing business with help of another panelist. A word from the later, rallied the support which the former was seeking.

(d) Involvement: Became aware of various initiatives taken by the US DoD in synch with the corporate there. The event was given a heads up by none other than Shri Sundar Pichai and a senator / congress man.

(e) Time Management: Barring one odd event of the first cycle on the first day, all events started on time and ended on time. It helped to attend back to back events.

(f) Responsive Event: The dedication and promptness in answering the questions was amazing. It made whole event very responsive and unique. There were some uncomfortable questions which were handled very effectively and truthfully.

(g) Wide Canvas: First two days were by the industry experts from various corporate houses. Sessions on the last day were conducted by Googlers.

(h) The Military Spouse: The importance given to military spouses as well was worth admiration. All avenues were available for military spouses.

(j) Grass-root Level Training: The training events were totally with hands down approach. For example, the session on the optimisation of linked profile was heavily subscribed. It told us small things like effect of 'Open to Opportunities' badge, or effect of a professional looking picture, use of rank and decorations on profile. These insights were given with real statistics. This actually made a lot of sense. (There was a bias for selling the Linked In premier services. But one can neglect that, keeping overall good this session achieved).

(k) 121: On a personal note, there is an one to one session with a Google in the next week. I am looking forward to it.

3. A few points for improvement, or which could have been better.

(a) Cancellation: Registration process was smooth but was kind of one way. All events were fixed capacity events. The attendees allowed were 500. If you, inadvertently, registered twice for any event, it was difficult, rather near to impossible to cancel it. It might have led to some deserving veteran not getting through.

(b) Mix Up: The home page showed 'Join Live' for each event. But if session is full then you could not join even if you have registered for event. I missed one event on the first day. The trick was to link up through the Google Calendar, once it was understood, I did not miss any event.

(c) Centre of Arc: Majority focus was on the US veterans and efforts for their career progression. This is very good, and I wish we also have this kind of synergy here.

4. There were some basic disadvantages for me in particular: For me it took me some time to get used to the accent. It is my shortcoming. Being in India, the events were at odd hours. But the Gyaan which it imparted, made it worth the trouble. I noted a few names which I thought could be our ForceNet Members or ForceNet Family Members.

5. The Key Take Away: Networking and focus are keys to success.

Thank you very much Iq Sir for this wonderful opportunity. We are, indeed, a privileged lot, to be blessed with this brotherhood.

From Maj Ajit Kulkarni

Dear Col Iqbal & Forces Network Team,

At the outset I would like to express my sincere gratitude for sharing the information regarding Google VetNet career week. The program initiated for veterans round the world with participants like Accenture and others along with Google is really excellent with a very sincere objective of helping veterans in their careers post service.



I was fortunate to be assigned a mentor who is a retired Senior officer, Commodore of the US navy and has served for 30yrs in various critical appointments and leading key missions for the US navy.

The 30 minutes interaction with him was very enriching where he briefly explained his transition story, understood my story, gave some valuable pieces of advice to me and also reviewed and suggested changes to my resume.

The officer was so humble and gave very frank opinions and suggestions about resume building and corporate culture.

A very important point which he shared was that "corporates respect the service you have rendered to the nation during your military service, but that's not the reason they would hire you. It will be your skills, knowledge and the benefit you bring to the organization which influences the hiring decisions."

Also, regarding resume building he have very nice pointer like

- (i) Space in your resume is a cost. So make appropriate use of it.
- (ii) Bring out how you have benefitted your past organization in terms of growth, profit, revenue etc. Instead of writing your job description
- (iii) Use bullet point to describe your personal strength
- (iv) Date of Birth should not be mentioned on resume.

It was **a lifetime experience for me** to connect and interact with a US navy senior Officer and I owe it to IQ Sir.

There are also many webinars on different topics in the offering throughout the week which would really be helpful to all of us if we are able to utilize this opportunity.

Once again I would thank IQ Sir for sharing information about Google VetNet with us. Would love to hear from others who have registered for this program.

From Col CP Prem VAS

I signed up to VetNet to understand the nuances of transition across the seas - how are they doing it differently, what can we learn from a different perspective? So that we could benefit with our own transitions. I could not attend the entire session and had to be off & on the webinar.



A few of the best takeaways:

- Translating mil experience into a language aligned to the roles and responsibilities of the new role in an entirely different environment had a lot many speakers give out their viewpoints. It came out, without doubt, that veterans need to hone this skill at all costs to be a successful transitioner.
- The ability to get into specifics ! A seemingly simple response to "Tell me about Yourself" had such depth in the way some seasoned veterans responded.
- The veteran support system there included involving the families and how they play their role individually as well as a support system to their spouse.
- Even addressing a salutation in the email was covered. However, the culture there is different from ours and therefore we need to be aware of the nuances.
- I specifically liked how to handle an interview conversation veering towards an unpredicted direction and how to come out of it. Americans are forthright here, they are OK to own up a mess up rather than flog a dead horse! This was my experience too when I was working in HR of Las Vegas based MNC where we had more than half the employees from the US.

Thanking Col Iqbal for making the session happen and I certainly have picked up finer aspects of transitioning in my coaching and mentoring for veterans back at home. Urging all transition officers to make use of such opportunities to make informed decisions for their second career.

From Cdr XYZ (name withheld on request)

I had also signed up for the Google Vetnet program. I was assigned a Googler (he was not a veteran though) who gave me some pointers on my resume, which I would work on. I did attend some of the webinars, and found the ones on Tech and Consulting useful, especially how people dealt with 'imposter syndrome', as they venture into new pathways. Was also amazed at the spectrum of fields that US veterans get into, with some kind of institutional support.

Thanks to IQ Sir for sharing the intimation on Google VetNet Career Week in Forces Network.

Three Cheers to Forces Network – the Network that Works !

Guest Speak

IN INTERACTION WITH FORCES NETWORK TEAM

Maj Ved Prakash Sharma is an alumnus of NDA and was commissioned into the Corps of Signals in 1985. After serving for 16 years, he took premature retirement. He has done his M.Tech from IIT Kanpur. Having worked with corporate like Airtel, Ericsson and Nokia and CISCO for over 17 years, he quit to start his own venture into Agri Tech. He is the CEO and Co-Founder of Gratitude Farms. Gratitude Farms is into Food Forest Model of agriculture using the modern technology.



Team: You have had a fascinating career journey- a brilliant army career, an even more illustrious corporate career and now a farm entrepreneur. Tell us a little bit about your army career.

VP: I joined NDA with the 66th course in 1981 and was commissioned into Corps of Signals in 1985 from IMA. Every day in NDA, IMA and in Regimental life was a training for life and leadership. I had the honour of serving with many high quality officers, JCOs and NCOs. Merely working with them was a lesson in leadership. I served in Army for 16 years and took premature retirement in 2001. During this period, I served in Parachute Brigade, operational units in Valley and Northeast, and also got an opportunity to do my M Tech from IIT Kanpur.

Team: You were doing extremely well in your corporate avatar. You were working with a marquee brand in a leadership role, had fantastic compensation and suddenly you gave it all up? We are very keen to hear the thought process, the doubts in the mind, and finally what was that moment of epiphany that made you take this bold decision?

VP: I joined the Telecom sector in 2001. The first decade of 21st century was a period of explosive growth in Telecom industry in the country. The industry grew at an average rate of 30% - 40% per year. I worked in Airtel, Ericsson and Nokia from 2001 to 2010. I joined Cisco as Technology Director in 2011 and worked for seven years.

I was fortunate to experience a rapid growth in corporate life; but it can mostly be attributed to being "at the right place, at the right time" when a huge wave of growth came to the industry. The one thing that I could attribute to myself probably is the "right attitude". Rapid growth of the kind we experienced in that time meant experimenting and adapting new business, organisational and technology models every year, taking risks and more importantly, working assiduously when things went wrong, which they did so often, at such times.

Over the years, the gratitude to life and a relatively successful career manifested as an aspiration to do something more meaningful. The idea of becoming a social entrepreneur with a focus on livelihood for ex-servicemen (ESM) in their own villages took time to shape up over 2-3 years. I quit my corporate life in 2017 with two of my Cisco friends, and an old friend from Army, Brig Rakesh Kaul, from Signals. We started our NGO, Gramonnati Trust in the same year and our start-up, Gratitude Farms, a year later.

Looking back, the decision to leave the corporate life while from a high, and start something completely new and unknown happened when it had to. Circumstances arrange themselves to help a smooth transition. Almost every entrepreneur takes up the challenge of starting his/her new venture mostly on hope and optimism of the goals and impact; and that pretty much takes care of the fear of risks and failures.

So has it been with us. No epiphany; just one major step to start into the unknown and from there, one step at a time. While the direction of our start-up journey was clear from the first day, the specific goals took time to crystallise, as we understood more about our new field of work.

Team: With your competence and experience one would have expected a start-up in a high-techdigital domain. Why agriculture? It almost sounds counter intuitive.

VP: On the contrary. Agriculture is probably one of the best industries to apply all kinds of technology. Agritech, as it has come to be known, is the sunrise sector across the world for next 2-3 decades. The reasons are not far to seek.



Agritech sits right in the centre of a fast rising demand for high quality food and the challenge of reducing availability of irrigable land, crisis of water, problems in soil fertility due to massive use of chemicals and fertilisers, impact of climate change and so on. From a technology perspective, it is one of the most exciting and relevant field to be working in, for next few decades.

Team: What is the concept behind Gratitude Farms. Please explain the concept of Natural Precision farming. How does the business model work. Can it scale?

VP: Gratitude Farms Private Limited (www.gratitudefarms.online) is an Agri-tech start-up, that specialises in Natural Precision Farming and on-farm value additions with an integrated marketing/sales model.

Our Mission: To help convert a million acres of agricultural land to natural precision farming, in next 10 years; and in the process, help 100,000 ex-soldiers, rural women and youth to become Natural Farming entrepreneurs.

Food Forest Model

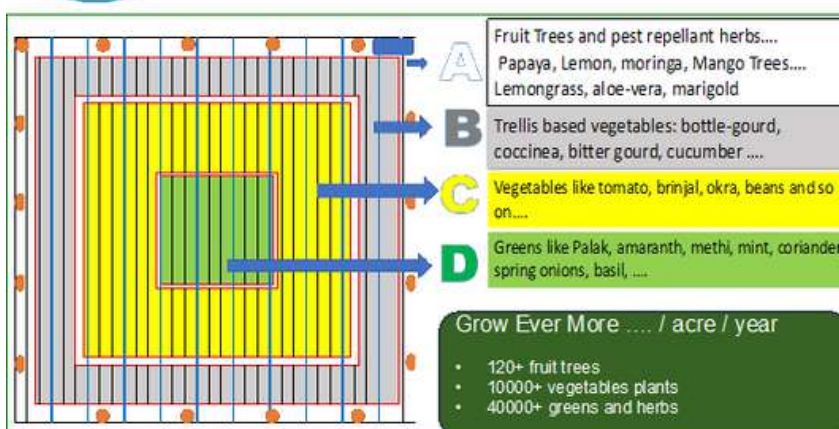
Our Food Forest Model is designed to be a means towards the 3P goals (people, planet, profit).It imbibes the principles of Climate Resilient Agriculture deeply in every aspect of its design and execution.

To increase the income per acre for farmers through completely organic and natural methods, we rely on two aspects viz. “on-farm” productivity, the other – selling the produce directly to customers at good rates: The “Food- Forest” model synthesizes three different aspects, viz. Traditional Practices of Organic Farming, technology and discipline in daily operations.



Food-Forest Model

High density Natural Farming with Precision Practices




Design Elements	
1	Modular and replicable Farm Design
2	Focus on soil health
3	Multi-Cropping
4	Staggered planting schedule (round the year harvest)
5	Irrigation (conservation of water)
6	Fertigation (semi-automated)
7	Integrated Pest Management
8	High quality organic nutrients / pest repellants (on-farm production)
9	Disciplined Operations
10	Continuous Training
11	Agri-Operations Center driven monitoring and yield tracking
12	Analytics for continuous improvement

Please view our YouTube Channel video that explains the concept of Food forest here

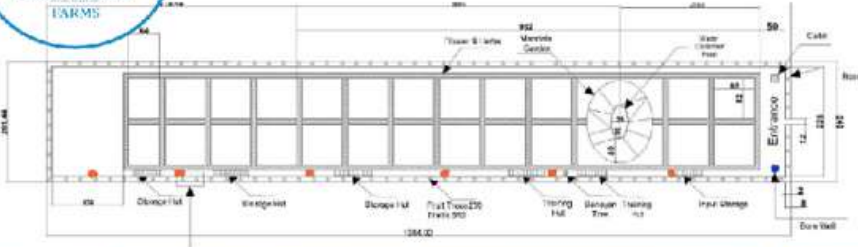

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFYgxiljYzG>




Here is the schema of an actual 9 acre Food Forest Model farm in Shadnagar, outside Hyderabad, that we have developed along the principles of Natural Precision Farming.



Food-Forest Model: Live Example

Shadnagar, Hyderabad: Food Forest Model

9 Acres, unused farmland
Food forest model design
7 water bodies created for rain-water harvesting
IoT controlled irrigation and fertigation

By Oct 2022:
4000 Fruit Trees (Papaya, Moringa); 40,000 vegetable plants
Expected Yield: 25 - 30 tons of fruits, greens and vegetables

Team: We are sure you would have had your share of ups and downs in the entrepreneurial journey. Tell us a bit about those, were there moments where you were on the verge of giving up and what kept you going?

VP: As an entrepreneur, the swing between hope and desperation is almost a routine affair! I started my entrepreneurial journey after 32 years' of military and corporate experience. While that experience is surely helpful, but the challenges arise, mostly due to the gap between our high goals and our limitation of resources.

I think every entrepreneur will confirm that the daily challenges and “failures” happen because we operate at the limits of our individual and organisational capacity. But then again, it is at these limits that true growth happens.

We have gone through every failure that a typical farmer goes through – destruction of our farm in cyclonic storms and unseasonal rains, pest attacks and so on. But, over a period of time, the learnings helped in developing a process driven system to mitigate the usual risks.

The real challenge came in figuring out a model for sales of our produce at a good price. It was further compounded by the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 in 2020-21. That resulted, on a regular basis, the perennial problem of most entrepreneurs, cash-flow. I have woken up on many days with a knot in my stomach as to where I will get the money to run my business on the day. But, here we are, four years into the business, growing at a healthy rate and planning to scale up to next level.



Team: Where is Gratitude Farms today in terms of its growth journey. Have you had any Angel/VC funding?

VP: Four years into the journey, we now have a robust model shaping up for ecosystem approach to business where we produce, we process and we sell.

We currently have over 100 acres of farmlands around Chennai, our main market and are planning to add over 500 acres in the next 12-18 months. We have two Grading Centres in Chennai with plans to setup another 4-6 in next one year. We supply our vegetables to B2B customers like BigBasket, Dunzo, Swiggy, More Supermarket and an increasingly rising number of local superstores in Chennai.

Over the last two years, we have raised Angel and Seed funding from Social Impact investors and are now gearing up for **pre-series A fund raising** to manage our growth and scaling up to business beyond Chennai into new cities. Next year, we plan to raise Series A Funding in the range of USD 10-15 million.

We hope to be a Rs. 300 Crore enterprise in next 4-5 years.

Team: What is the future of Gratitude Farm that you envisage? Any plans to go global?

VP: As I mentioned earlier, our mission is to take our expertise in Natural Precision Farming to over a million acres over the next 10 years. That also implies building integrated capacity of process and sell the produce.

Being an ex-servicemen enterprise, we are working on developing a model to involve more and more ex-servicemen in our growth plans. We are setting up a training centre to help ex-Armed Forces officers, JCOs and ORs learn and setup Agritech ventures as our partners.

We hope to go global in coming year or two for both, Project Exports - taking our natural precision farming expertise to other countries, as well as exports for fresh and processed natural products.

Team: You have indeed come a long way in your career. When you look back in hindsight what do you think were the major factors behind your success, who were your defining influences?

VP: Whatever I have achieved as an entrepreneur has largely been possible due to the training and experience of serving in Indian Army and my experience in global organisations like Cisco, Ericsson and Nokia.

One of the most defining influences for all of us are the crisis and difficulties that we invariably face in personal and professional lives. Each difficulty and crisis comes precisely to make us better human beings and better leaders. Only having gone through such experiences do we understand what it takes to build a successful enterprise and to understand and empathise with problems of others.



Team: Who are your role models or inspiring figures in your life?

VP: The role models and inspirations come in many ways in our journey, and they do not necessarily have to be famous figures. I draw a lot of inspiration from grassroot leaders working in rural India, with limited resources but unlimited faith in their goals. There are so many of them.

If I were to name a few in my Army life, my first two Commanding Officers, Col Shiv Raichand and Col (Late) SK Datta taught me a lot about leadership in the formative years as a young officer.

In my journey as an entrepreneur, I draw a lot inspiration from my mentor, Mr. Arun Jain (Chairman, Mission Samriddhi and Intellect Design Arena) and a number of grassroot entrepreneurs who have struggled and succeeded against all odds.



Team: What is your advice to military personnel who are keen on making a future in agriculture? What is your prognosis on the future of agriculture in India?

VP: Trends for future of employment are unfolding, hidden-in-plain-sight. The coming decades belong to entrepreneurship, micro-entrepreneurship, self-employment ever more.

Agri-tech sector is the sunrise sector for coming decades. The rising awareness levels for urban consumers for healthy food is helping create huge and rising demand of high-quality fresh and processed food. The opportunity lies in realising the need to bring in a structure and business focussed approach in what is essentially an unstructured industry.

Agritech is sunrise for two main reasons. Firstly, the amount of funding and investment in Agritech is rising rapidly, in line with the opportunities and demand. This investment coupled with democratisation of a wide range of technologies is enabling an eco-system for increasing number of Agritech start-ups to develop new business models for improving yields on farm production, minimising wastages through innovative food-processing technologies, shortening the farm-to-fork supply chain, models for last mile sales to include retail, B2B, B2C and hybrid models

The technologies include IoT for Precision Farming, satellite imagery, drone applications, cloud based platforms for near-real-time data management and monitoring, fintech for agriculture, machinery and automation for on-farm productivity enhancement,

A common mistake by many is to plan their next 10 years based on their experience and understanding of past 10! That is exactly where an entrepreneurial spirit can help us step out of comfort zones and take up calculated risks to succeed in our second careers.

For further information you can follow our YouTube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC61AuTlj_15ZXKLPCQF-F2w

Food Forest Model explained: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFYgxijYZg>

Also I can be connected on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/in/vpsharma/



Star of Forces Network

A Forces Network Star is a member of the Forces Network who has gone on to achieve glory in the his/her corporate/civilian avatar. The aim of this series is not just to celebrate our successes from the veteran community, which unfortunately we do not do enough, but also to inspire others. The ultimate goal is to set up a virtuous self-sustaining cycle of inspiration leading to more successes in turn inspiring many more.

IN INTERACTION WITH PUNYASLOKA PANDA

Capt Suren Bhandari did his graduation from Bikaner and was commissioned into the Dogra Regiment in March 1992 and went on to serve in Punjab, Arunachal Pradesh and in J&K. Suren left the Army in Mar 1997 and enrolled for an MBA program from Devi Ahilya University Indore. He has worked for companies like Airtel, Computer Sciences Corporation, Accenture and is now employed with Pepsico as Sr Director HR Operations. He is interested in golf, spirituality, meditations, Indian mythology, astrology, Angel investing, and now he is studying financial markets. Suren is based out of Bangalore.



Punya: Please tell us something about your background prior to joining the Army, and your subsequent Army career?

Suren: I come from a defence services background, my father was an emergency commissioned officer (ECO) who got commissioned in 3/9 GR, fought the 1965 war with the Gurkhas, and then he joined the B.S.F in 1969 and fought the 1971 war from the B.S.F. He retired from B.S.F in 1996.

For me it was the natural choice to follow my father's footsteps and join the Army and so I did, and after the basic training at OTA, Chennai I got commissioned into the Dogra Regiment in Mar 1992. I had the opportunity to serve in Punjab during Op Rakshak, in Arunachal Pradesh and in J&K. I did YO's, Commando course, Mountain Warfare course and 81mm Mortar course during my Army tenure.

After successful completion of my short service tenure I decided to explore the corporate world and moved out in Mar 1997.

Punya: Give us an understanding about your role and what you are presently engaged in.

Suren: After leaving the Army I felt I had to enhance my educational qualification so I enrolled for an MBA program and did MBA in Human Resources. After my MBA I worked for corporates like Airtel for a year. Computer Sciences Corporation for six years, with Accenture for 16 years, and presently I am working for Pepsico for the past two years. I started my corporate career like most faujis do, I started with Facility Management, and then gradually moved to doing other roles like Service

Management, Audits, Business Continuity Management and eventually to HR Operations. I set up the HR Shared Services in Accenture, scaled that team to 1300 strong and ran that team for about 10 years.

Now I am a Senior Director HR Operations with Pepsico for the past two yrs. In my present role I lead a large HR Operations function and manage multiple HR processes globally supporting over three lakh Pepsico employees spread across many countries. It has been an interesting role since I have been engaged in transitioning work and setting up of this team from the scratch.

Punya: How did you prepare yourself for the military to corporate transition?

Suren: Frankly I had no clue about the corporate world and I wasn't prepared, so I did have some not so pleasant experiences when I joined the corporate world. Those days in 1997 there weren't many opportunities in the corporate sector and hence finding a suitable job wasn't easy so I had to work my way up from the bottom. I did some odd part time jobs while doing my MBA which also gave me some very important life experiences and learnings. My MBA did give me an entry in the corporate sector but I had to make my own place in the world.

I was fortunate to get some good mentors in my early stage of corporate life who kept guiding me and kept challenging me to do more. One of my mentors told me to unlearn a lot of things that I had learnt earlier, I was also advised to keep an open mind to new learnings. It was just my zeal to keep learning and keep growing that kept me motivated and gave me opportunities which otherwise may not have come to me.

Punya: What were the challenges faced during your transition? How did you overcome the challenges?

Suren: As they say, change is never easy, hence for me transition from the Army to corporate world was quite difficult initially. Subconsciously human beings look for comfort in known environments/cultures/people and I guess I was also looking for a similar culture and environment as an Infantry unit but soon realized I needed to adapt to the new reality. Corporate world is different than what one experiences in the Army and one needs to adapt. Initially I used to interact only in a limited circle of Army friends but eventually I started expanding my horizon and started networking with people across other functions that gave me a lot of new learnings and helped me settle down. Honestly no preparation is enough for this transition, the two worlds are totally different, one needs to experience it first and then adapt to it.

Punya: How has been your experience in the corporate domain so far?

Suren: My experience of the corporate sector has been extremely positive and I have realized that corporate sector is a great place where one can achieve whatever one aspires for. The learning opportunities in corporate sector are immense, potential to do different things is huge and as the corporate sector has opened up, there are plenty of opportunities available for Army veterans.

Corporate sector has evolved over a period of time, Multi National Companies came and changed the ways of working, defined new paradigms and brought in a culture of employee welfare. Gone are the days where human beings were treated as disposable resources and respect for domain knowledge didn't exist. Corporate sector has a lot of respect for ethics and values, hard work, domain knowledge, spirit and leadership skills and it can be very rewarding for someone who really wants to make a difference. Deep domain knowledge and high quality talent is something every corporate looks for.

Punya: Academy Training teaches us a lot and it prepares us for our future life. What has been your biggest take away which has been really a big lesson even as you take up challenges in corporate life?

Suren: Army is a wonderful training organization and prepares one for all kinds of situations in life. The same training is also very useful in the corporate sector.

In the Army I was pushed to do well on courses, little did I realize then that I was being pushed to learn new skills to be successful, that helped me to develop the ability to learn different things in the corporate sector. I have done roles in Facility management, Service management, Audits, Business Continuity Management, HR Operations etc and most of these are from unconnected fields but I was more than willing to learn new fields and develop my domain knowledge.

The second area that comes to my mind is the need to remain calm in adverse situations, understand the situation, make an action plan and then execute the plan. I would give full credit to the Army to have prepared me to deal with these situations with ease and I have implemented those learnings in different roles in different situations in my job.



My Hobby : Golf

Punya: How important is it to understand your own expertise and then to work towards upskilling in that domain to have a Better Outing in corporate?

Suren: Corporate sector values deep domain knowledge and sharp execution skills. One really needs to understand what is your area of interest, your skill set, your strengths, your weaknesses and based on that, focus on what one wants to achieve in the corporate job. And I can understand that one may not know all this initially but one will do well to understand these as soon as possible because that will give you the edge to give the right direction to your career in the corporate sector.

Punya: There must have been great lessons during this tremendous journey after hanging the spurs. Can you share a few from your experience?

Suren: There are many experiences that gave me some very important lessons. Some of these are:

- Be a professional in whatever you do.
- Be seen as someone who is dependable and can deliver in any situation.
- Build domain knowledge and be better than your boss
- Build credibility, that will go a long way in opening various opportunities
- Be a good leader, one may need to unlearn and relearn some practices learnt in the Army
- Keep challenging your limits and keep learning new things
- Stay relevant. Corporate sector is fast paced and unless one makes an effort it is easy to become outdated.
- Learn the art of storytelling, it will go a long way in projecting you as a good leader.

Punya: What are your future plans and do you have any special Goals? And how are you preparing for achieving them?

Suren: My goal is to make people in my team achieve their full potential and I would love to create and leave behind a legacy once I retire from my job in next few years.

Punya: The VUCA world is a huge learning experience for all of us. Could you please share how much the present world situation has impacted your professional world? And what is your insight and suggestions to our readers?

Suren: The modern world has blurred lines between personal and professional worlds. VUCA is definitely the buzz word after what we experienced in 2020. While we all deal with such situations differently but I personally feel that we need to develop the ability to move and respond to changes in the business/personal environment with actions that are focussed, quick and agile.

We need to take on **Volatility** with **Versatility** and move from **Uncertainty** to **Understanding**. We can tackle **Complexity** by **Simplicity** and, address **Ambiguity** with **Agility**.

VUCA world forces us to have a balanced approach to everything, be it work or personal life. We need to experiment with things and start getting comfortable with uncertainty. We also need to build curiosity to be able to learn new things fast to be able to adapt to new realities in this fast changing world.

Punya: Do you have any other hobbies or interests, which you pursue passionately? And how?

Suren: I have many hobbies that keep me going. I am a golfer and look forward to my game every week. I read about Indian mythology, spirituality and I am also interested in Astrology. I have developed recent interest in angel investing and the financial

Punya: One question that you think every officer should ask himself/ herself while preparing for his/her career after Defence services?

Suren: I will urge every officer to ask himself/herself these questions:

- what do you know about the corporate world? How do you perceive the corporate sector?
- What do you want/expect to achieve in the corporate world?
- What skills do you bring to the table that you should be hired?
- What makes you unique?
- What's your story? And why should someone listen to it?

If you have answers to these questions you are on your way to a good start.



The support System My Family

Punya: Your views on the role played by Family, Friends and Well-Wishers in the Transition and in future assignments?

Suren: Transition from OGs to civil street and then to corporate world is not always easy, it needs mental preparation, physical effort and lots of support from friends and family. One may not know where to start, what all to do and that's where family and friends play a big role. I know of an officer whose daughter prepared his CV and created his online account on LinkedIn and Naukri to apply for jobs. Imagine the support and strength this officer must have felt getting this support. This support system of near and dear ones is needed at every stage in life and without this support one just cannot do well in his/her career. I will go a step further and say that building a network of friends and well-wishers in the corporate world is extremely important, it can not only give one a platform but also open many doors in career. Fortunate are those who are blessed with a great circle of friends and family. More power to friends and family. uncertainty. We also need to build curiosity to be able to learn new things fast to be able to adapt to new realities in this fast changing world.

Punya: Your advice on being future ready for officers planning their transitions from a technology perspective?

Suren: I think these days it's extremely important for all officers planning to transition to the corporate sector to be comfortable with tech from a functional perspective. Usage of technology varies from one industry to the other and from company to company but basic technology is now used almost everywhere. Officers will do well if they are comfortable with the Microsoft suite, effective outlook usage, making effective powerpoint presentations, and being able to use MS Excel comfortably. Officers with command over MS suite can do some advanced courses like advanced excel, macros and Power BI etc. A good understanding of basic functional tech can really help officers to be very efficient and can really improve the effectiveness and delivery standards of the role/function they will join.



Capt Punyasloka Panda is an ex-Infantry Officer and was commissioned into 8 Garhwal Rifles. Post his Indian Army tenure he has worked with many renowned companies, predominantly in the field of Crisis Management & Business Continuity. Presently he is working with Accenture Solutions, based out of NCR. He is a CPP and ICRA certified ISO22301 Lead Auditor.

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Interview, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Author

Moment In Time

This month onwards we are starting with a Photography section “**Moment in Time**” to provide an outlet for creative side of our esteemed members. The rules for submission are as under:-

- Forces Network members, spouses, and their wards can submit images for publication.
- No Nudity or Porn.
- No mention of Military establishments or unit identity or tactical numbers or tailboard numbers.
- It's a photography section, so no images of various get togethers and social functions will be published.
- The longer side of image should be 2048 pixels.
- Maximum 5 images will be published every month. The images must be submitted by 20th of every month.
- Mention your Instagram and/other social media ID.

While submitting the photographs, alongwith the Title, the details of Aperture, Shutter speed, ISO, Camera used, Lens, and Focal length be also included, In case of a mobile click, the same may please be mentioned.

All Photos may please be sent to forcesnetworkz@gmail.com by 20th of every month.



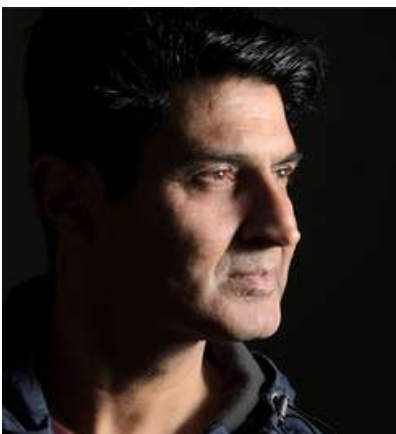
In the inaugural issue we are publishing images clicked by Col Jeetender Sharma, to get the ball rolling.



Across Timelines and Geographies...

The gaze, traveling across the crowd froze the moment for eternity. Wafting over the snow clad mountains and verdant valleys, transcending timelines and geographies it told tales of blue hills and beyond ...It was a Day in Paradise... :)

F8, Shutter speed 1/30, ISO 400
Nikon D7000, 50 mm



Col Jeetender Sharma *aenthusiastic trekker and a bike rider, is a self-taught photographer. Having served in some of the remotest parts of the country has enabled him to capture the beauty of the places and its people. He has not restricted himself to any particular genre of photography and his work ranges from macro to portraits to Landscapes. A passionately driven personality is specially inspired by enchanting beauty of North East India.*



F5.6,
Shutter
speed
1/400,
ISO 400
Nikon
D850,
500 mm

AFTER THE DAY IS DONE AT KAZIRANGA

F8,
Shutter
speed
1/200,
ISO 100
Nikon
DD850,
105 mm



MAGNIFICENT REFRACTIONS

F5.6,
Shutter
speed
1/2000,
ISO 200
Nikon
D850,
500 mm



FISH EAGLE OF KAZIRANGA



F5.6, Shutter
speed 1/200,
ISO 64
Nikon D850,
120 mm

GRANNY FROM LADAKH

Women Power

Spouses and daughters of Defence Officers, as well as those who have donned the uniform, have immense potential as individuals. While many of them have already established themselves as successful independent entities, a very large number still has to recognise and exploit their inherent hidden capabilities and worth. In this series we plan to showcase the achievements of such women of the members of Forces Network who have carved a niche for themselves through hard work, grit and determination, so as to provide adequate motivation to the others.

IN INTERACTION WITH UDAY SHRIWAS

Maj Lekha Nair was commissioned into the Corps of Signals in 2001. She passed out with the WSES(O) - 17th Course from OTA Chennai. Post her Army career, she has been working in the social sector. Currently she is working as a CSR Consultant and also runs her own NGO - Sevastha Foundation. She is also an entrepreneur and owns a Restaurant business in Pune.



Uday: Please tell us about yourself and what do you do?

Lekha: I am an Engineering graduate and started my career as a software engineer at Tata Infotech. I joined the Indian Army in Mar 2001. I was part of the WSES (O) - 17 and was commissioned into the Corps of Signals. I completed my short service tenure and took release from the Army in 2006. Thereafter I worked with non-profit organisations like Yuva Parivartan and Tata Strive which are engaged in skilling youth from underprivileged backgrounds.

At present, I work as a Senior CSR Consultant with Soulace Social Venture. My core area of work is carrying out Impact Assessments of CSR projects implemented by major PSUs/Corporates. I also have my own NGO - Sevastha Foundation which is working for empowering women and youth. In addition to this, since 2019, I ventured into the hospitality industry and am now running a restaurant in Pune named Beetroot Bistro.

Uday: What is it that inspired you to embark on the Entrepreneurial journey?

Lekha: I became an entrepreneur by accident. It was my husband, Col V Nandakumar (Retired) and a friend couple who had hatched the plot. It was during a period where my husband was in between jobs when the urge to try one's hand in business

blossomed. We chanced upon a Restaurant which was getting shut down as it was running in a loss. We thought it would be a better to try to turn it around rather than opening a new one. However, like all good husbands he started the project and left it on me to complete it as he got a job offer.



OIC Signal Center - Jalandhar

Uday: You are an entrepreneur in the restaurant business - an extremely competitive industry. What are the challenges you encountered?

Lekha: Yes, the hospitality industry is truly competitive especially the restaurant business. It was even more challenging for me as I do not have any F&B background and neither am I a foodie. It certainly helped that we took over a running business which provided us with some head start as far as staffing, menu curation and vendors were concerned. However, before we got our act together, within three months of taking over the business, COVID struck and we were faced with a lockdown. The rent continued and we suffered huge losses. To add to the woes, our partners decided to quit the business and moved out of the city. It was a very uncertain phase where many big and small restaurants around us were shutting down. I was not sure whether I should continue bearing the losses hoping for a post Covid turn around or cut short my losses and quit. That is when may be my Army training kicked in and I decided to hang in there. After struggling through the stages of full lockdowns with 'home deliveries only' to partial lockdowns and restricted settings with numerous safety protocols, now my restaurant is running well. Beetroot Bistro is now a profitable venture. It is a popular hangout place in Pune's most happening area, Koregaon Park serving Italian, Continental and Asian cuisine.

Uday: Army life must have had influence in your choices as you travelled and grew in personal and professional life, could you please tell us more about the Fauji aspect of your life journey?

Lekha: My tenure in the Army as an officer and later as an Army wife has been truly endearing and full of learnings. As I had mentioned I was commissioned into the

Corps of Signals and had postings in Jalandhar, Srinagar and OTA Chennai. In my short stint, I was lucky to experience different aspects of Army - peace, field and instructional postings. Each tenure, each appointment taught me a number of things. One of the most cherished moments was donning of multiple hats in my Srinagar unit. The Commanding Officer had the confidence in a lady officer with hardly two years of service to perform the duties of Adjutant, Quarter Master and Company Commander HQ company. I was under tremendous pressure, but that was also the time that I learnt the most. If I was to pick the most important learning, it would be the aspect of mental flexibility. Unlike Corporate, in Armed forces, we do not get to pick up the posting or job as per liking, an officer may be doing the duties of Adjutant one day and may be shifted to the Quarter master role the next day. We do not question it and neither do we feel special about it, but believe me it is not a common attribute. It speaks of tremendous mental flexibility and adaptiveness which is treasured in the Corporate World.

Uday: You mentioned about your work in welfare sector, can you kindly elaborate the same?

Lekha: After I left the Armed Forces, I tried my luck for the civil services. I was engaged for a year or two in studies for the UPSC. I got through the prelims and mains, but did not figure in the merit list. I was living in Mumbai in SF accommodation as my husband was posted in a field area, I had time and nothing much to do. I was not keen on a corporate job as I planned to join my husband once he moves to a peace location. That is the time that I volunteered for social work with a Mumbai based NGO - "Yuva Parivartan". They were engaged in skilling youth and providing them with career opportunities. I was motivated by the kind of work and difference they made to underprivileged families, that I joined them and worked with them till I was in Mumbai. Thereafter I got an offer from Tata Strive, a newly launched skilling initiative of Tata Group, to set up their Pune operations in 2016. My CSR impact assessment studies take me to many remote rural areas in different States. These studies give me a huge understanding of the human challenges faced and inspire me to contribute in whatever way I can for the society.

I set up my own NGO, Sevastha Foundation in 2018 to work for empowering women and youth. Sevastha has been running skilling classes for the underprivileged women in the Mankhurd area of Mumbai. During COVID times, with the help of contributions from my friends and family, I was able to provide rations to more than 1000 families in Pune. I am also an active member of the Rotary International since 2013 and have been contributing to different welfare projects under the Rotary banner.

Uday: The very ethos of NGO and Business are mutually exclusive, how do you balance out the two of them?

Lekha: It is absolutely true that NGO and Business are poles apart. While the main motto of a NGO is selfless service, a Business thrives on profitability for oneself. " Profit" is usually treated as a negative word, however I take it as a smart word. A business

employs people fruitfully and contributes to the economy while the NGO supports the challenged sections of the society and provide them means for sustainability. Both are very essential for a vibrant and progressive economy.

Because of my leanings for social work, I am also able to be empathetic towards my Restaurant staff and help them overcome their personal issues. Hence I have been able to retain my staff even through the Covid times. Else in the restaurant industry staff keeps changing jobs at the drop of the hat.



With My Husband and my inspiration

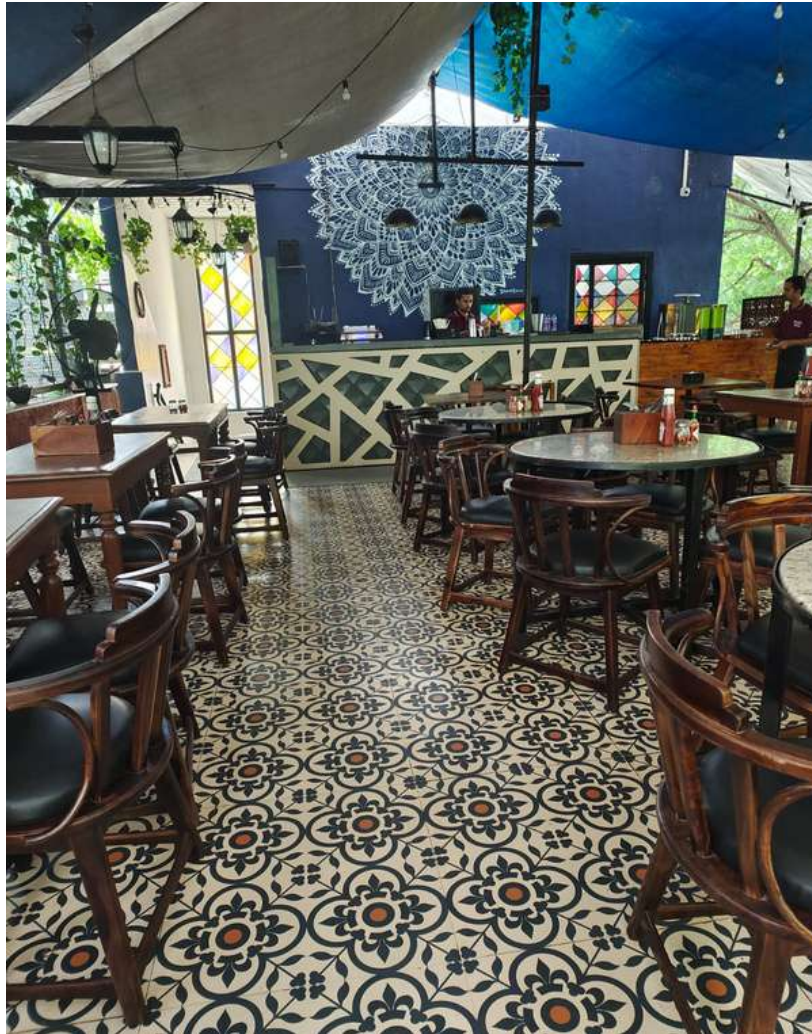
Uday: How do you find time for all these activities?

Lekha: Well if there is one thing in short supply, it is time, but then it is also the most wasted resource. One must attempt to do whatever one desires in their lifetime and the secret for that is empowering people within your teams. One must not have a

narrow vision and limit themselves to one activity. Hands on experience is very important, but at the same time training and delegation of responsibilities provides much flexibility to undertake other activities too. In fact I for one get bored of an activity if done over a period of time, I need change of scene and all these varied works offer me that.

Uday: What is the message that you would like to impart to fellow faujis and their families?

Lekha: I am not confident whether I am qualified to be advising this diverse and much experienced group, but if there is one message I would like to send across, it would be to "Believe in Oneself". I have seen many officers and families unwilling to step out of their comfort zones and take risks. It may be due to the fact that we all join



The Cafe in KP, Pune

Armed Forces at a very young age and do not ever have to think of the next pay check or job opportunity. Further the secured environment of the Armed Forces makes us relaxed and we think we will not be able to work in the outside world, but believe me we are the best and the service ethos ingrained in us make us natural leaders and winners. So be it Corporate job, Politics or Business venture - whatever be your passion - Give it a shot.



Capt Uday K Shriwas was commissioned into the Corps of Signals, and served in various theaters during his service for five years, including in a newly raised RR Battalion. Thereafter he has worked with many renowned Companies, like Kingfisher Airlines, IFB Home Appliances, JK Cement, and Yes Bank Ltd. He enjoys working in the field of Marketing, Business Development, Strategy. He also has keen interest in the field of Personal Branding. He is presently working as Regional Head - Honour First (Defence Vertical) IDFC FIRST Bank

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Interview, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Editor

ADVERTORIAL

The Hum Fauji Initiatives Money Talk

Is the fence destroying the crop?



Being part of the armed forces often means having to bear a higher degree of life-risk than others. This is also something that comes up in our financial planning discussions quite often with serving officers. While there are insurance provisions under the Army / Navy / Air Force Group Insurance Funds, it is but natural for all to think about having their own safety net too. Also, is the cover provided by these Govt agencies adequate in this hyper-inflation era? May not be so.

Typically, one will buy an 'insurance' from someone in their own hometown or community circles and then the word spreads fast in the peer group. Now everyone is thinking of getting the same 'policy'!

Someone from that peer group gets in touch with us to discuss the pros and cons. Here is how the conversation goes.

I'm getting Guaranteed returns!

This is something that all of them are hooked on to. A junior Officer with limited personal responsibilities at his age, was considering paying Rs 30,000 per month (☺!) for this 'insurance policy' for a period of 10 years. That

is quite some money given out every month!

The 'hook' was that the insurance company is guaranteeing that he will start getting a regular income from the policy from 15th year onwards till the end of 20th year and the total amount paid to him will be around Rs 67 lakhs these years.

But what about insurance, we ask? Weren't we talking about insurance in the first place?

Yes, there is 'also' a life insurance of around Rs 37 lakh.

What do we say to it?

We listen to these promises of the agents often. And then tell them that they are not gaining much or what they actually deserve, in this entire scheme.

Prompt comes the reply that the invested money is getting doubled. Then we need to explain that even if it is getting doubled, it is happening over a period of 20 years, which is a return of about 4.32% per annum!

The interesting part is yet to come though. The

actual life insurance amount is almost equal to your originally invested amount. And after the policy period is over, you are left without any insurance at the age of 50 years.

Let's do some useful calculations

As the primary discussion was regarding insurance, we then do some reverse calculation of how much should that officer be paying for that actual insurance of Rs 37 Lakhs in question.

Many of them are surprised when inform them that they can get the same insurance cover, that too till 60 years of age, for as little as Rs 4000-5000 a year. Yes, just above 1% of what they actually planned to invest in a year. How? We will get to that in a bit.

Just one important point we need to highlight. That Rs 30,000 a month investment is a good commitment - just that it needs proper planning and appropriate execution. The one that was being explored was not the right one.

Coming back to insurance. How to get that cheap an insurance?

The simplest insurance product will do the trick!

This is the simplest and in fact, the purest form of life insurance. You pay some money as a premium and the insurance company, in return, assures that a fixed amount will be paid to your nominees in case of your untimely demise. Just that you pay the premium and forget about it, in other words you do not get the money back. There are some policies that offer a return of premium even in term insurance, but then the premium is not as low and again defeats the purpose of 'insurance'.

Taking more realistic aspirations and family goals, a Term Insurance policy assuring your nominees of Rs 2 crores in case of an eventuality, costs only around Rs 15,000 a year

at the age of 30 years. The caveat here is that this is for a person buying this policy at a young age. But even at an increased age, premium of such policies remains very reasonable. Why? Because the agent commissions are very low and this is no fancy product.

The premium then remains constant throughout the policy term. If the same policy is bought by someone at, say, age 35, the premium could go up to just around Rs 25,000 a year. So, the key is getting this early on in your career.

In case of any eventuality, this money can be used by your nominees and loved ones for any purpose. Be it for repaying existing loans like a home loan or retirement of the spouse or higher education of children. It can be anything.

A challenge

Being part of the defence fraternity comes with its own set of challenges. One such challenge is that if you buy a Term Plan when you are posted to a field area, it is likely that the insurance company could deny you the policy or load some extra premium on it. This is due to the higher risk your life could face in those situations. So, the trick is to take it when you are in a peace area – this is all within rules.

Discuss with your financial planner about all the factors you should take into account to arrive at an ideal term insurance amount and tenure for you.

Contact us.



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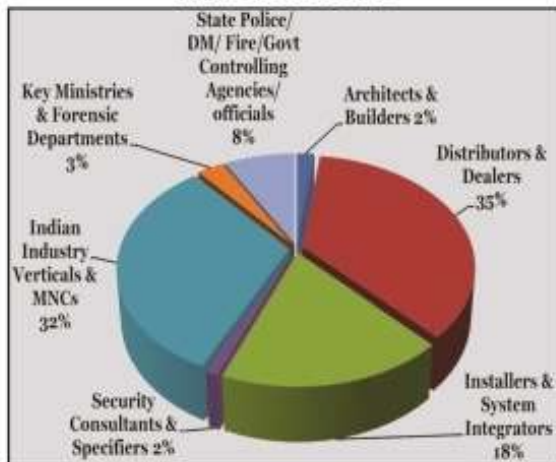
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Author of the Month

SHIV MATHUR

IN INTERACTION WITH RAJESH NAIR



About the Author:

Cdr Shiv Mathur, hails from Kota, Rajasthan though he was born in Varanasi. He did his B.Tech in Electrical Engineering from REC/NIT Warangal in 1989. He has served in the Indian Navy for 16 yrs plus till 2005 and took PMR without pension.

He has worked in corporate like IBM, Tulip Telecom, Tata Teleservices Ltd (TTSL), Tata Communications (TCTSL), Saudi Telecom Company (STC), Juniper Networks and Reliance Jio. His last role was as AVP Network Security. He moved to Poland in 2019 saying adieu to his corporate career. Meditative state of mind is something which came as a surprise but he discovered the process which he subconsciously went through leading to this gift of peace of mind. He had transitioned into his spiritual passion as a profession and has been doing stuff related to that, like a YouTube channel, and taught meditation in countries like Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, Hungary. His maiden book got published on 25 May 2022.

His wife has been teaching Economics in International schools, and daughter is an animation VFX artist working in a big film studio in Paris. he has been an avid cyclist also.



Meditation in Rishikesh

Rajesh: Tell us something about your background prior to joining the Armed Forces, and your subsequent Forces career?

Shiv: It is really interesting to reminisce about the background before joining the Armed Forces. Total memory recall! I was born on 09 Mar 1966 in Varanasi. It was an auspicious day as it was Mahashivaratri. My maternal grandparents lived in Varanasi and their residence was just 200 meters away from the famous Kashi Vishwanath temple. My father was employed with the education department in Rajasthan, and he had retired as a Principal of a government school in Kota. So I was brought up in Kota where I did my entire schooling. Majorly from Saint Paul's School. I got admission in REC Warangal through the Rajasthan PET entrance examination in 1985. I completed my B.Tech in Electrical Engineering in 1989.

Thereafter I joined the Indian Navy in Aug 1989. I was selected in the Navy through the University Entry Scheme while being in 3rd year of Engineering through campus recruitment. That is why my date of commission is 01 Aug 1988 while I joined the active service in Aug 1989. I was an introvert and a shy person while in school for various reasons. I had totally turned around in my college days and became an extremely extrovert personality. I was never a man who was into books. I hated reading books so it was difficult to even study during the academic years and always left 30% of the syllabus. Fortunately I did well in whatever I could study and somehow managed to get through the competition and somehow completed my Engineering. Why I am mentioning this is because this has a direct co-relation with my spiritual journey and experiential learning and subsequently teaching meditation and writing a book.

Rajesh: After a successful corporate career you moved to meditation and you are also active on YouTube. What motivated you to write the book?

Shiv: I quit the Indian Navy in 2005 prematurely seeing no opportunity to grow as well as not seeing the possibility of meeting the financial commitments. I was fortunate to get an opening in IBM and then my career went off smoothly moving in between different companies like Tulip Telecom as Regional CTO, Tata Teleservices as GM (MPLS Network), Tata Communications (Network Auditor), Saudi Telecom (Project Director Wireless 4G Network rollout), Juniper Networks and lastly Reliance Jio (AVP Network Security).

In 2013, when I was in Jakarta on a project from TTSL and then in 2015 when I was in Saudi telecom, I realized that it is not worth chasing money. Irony is that I was getting a very handsome salary in these places. In Jakarta I started to read the Bhagavad Gita and that influenced me a lot. This was a turnaround period for me personally as well as spiritually. Since then I have been travelling to the Himalayas almost twice a year and spending two weeks to one month or more. I decided that I need to pursue this passion of mine as a dedicated effort and therefore decided or rather planned to quit the corporate world.

In 2019, I had planned few retreats in Europe where I was to teach the philosophy of meditation. As luck would have it, my wife who has been teaching economics in International schools also got a job in the British School at Warsaw, Poland. I could move to Europe and this allowed me to continue teaching in Europe, specifically in Warsaw. Due to Covid, all came to a grinding halt. During lockdown I decided to upload the videos on YouTube, as that was my intention to do while I was visiting Gangotri, Kedarnath, etc in 2018 and 2019. The intention was that let the seekers know how and where to find realized yogis. Two of my videos got viral and that is how I realized that now it is actually a birth of this so called YouTube channel. So YouTube channel was never ever in my plans or dreams, but it just happened. I had to return to India in Nov 2020 for some reasons as my wife decided to return completing her contract in Jul 2021. Though we had an option to continue, but nevertheless we returned. By the way, my wife strongly opposes my spiritual exploits.

I realized that it would not be a good idea to keep uploading videos as I am not really a YouTuber as such. Also I was suggested by some to write a book or start blogging about my travel experiences and my rendezvous with Yogis in remote places. I also realized that it would be good to document the entire philosophy I teach, in a form of a book which is more structured and in one single piece. I have been travelling a lot since 2005, and this May I was in Pune in my house all by myself, as my wife had decided to again take up a job, and had moved to Mumbai where she is teaching in Dhirubhai Ambani International School. She had working there before before she joined the British School, so she kind of returned there.



Retreat in Geneva

I decided that before I move to Himalayas for my next sojourn I better write this book. Hence this book happened. I could finish the book in max 10 days flat. I was new to the book world or rather Authors world, so had no clue about how to publish it and to sell it. HOW THE HELL YOU SELL?? Then the next 2-3 days went in researching about the whole echo system. I then took the self publishing route and could publish it through four publishers to make it reach globally.

In India it got published by Notion Press, who in turn has distributed it through Amazon and Flipkart. The book is priced at Rs 300/- in India. It is published outside India through Amazon international, Draft2Digital and Lulu. Both E-book and Print version have been published. These are available at all leading distributors and retailers. like Barnes and Nobles in US, Book Depository, Apple (ebook), Gardners, etc., to name a few. I am now working on releasing the audio book as well.



Class in Brussels

Rajesh: Your maiden book, tell us more about it, what it contains and what needs to be expected out of the book?

Shiv: This book deals with reprogramming of mind first by understanding how does human mind work. How does it generate thoughts, and how are negative thoughts generated. I chanced upon this process and methodology while being on a spiritual exploration since 2015. I travelled to the Himalayas met some great Yogis and discovered some places with great vibrations. I experienced many out of time and space experiences, which also graced me with a steady state of calmness in my mind. Almost a state where negative thoughts cease to flow, and mind is finally tamed, I analyzed the whole journey and found how it got processed through this and reached a state of calmness. I hope this book will eventually open you up and lead to your transformation if practiced sincerely with consistency. Though initially, it may appear to be tough to understand and you may find it difficult to read and may need 2-3 readings. This is not a novel, fiction where you enjoy reading but this is more like a science book where one has to focus to understand the nuances.

Rajesh: What were the challenges you faced while writing it?

Shiv: The challenges I faced while writing this book was that when you are writing or to be precise typing, you are letting your flowing thoughts to get converted into typing on a computer. So initially one is simply vomiting, and then one needs to clean up everything. There were many grammatical errors. In today's world of texting our grammar has taken a total beating. So I realized that correcting the grammar was another mammoth task. Then came formatting issues and formatting was a constant process as with every correction, addition, modification the formatting was needed. How does one decide on the book size, what should be the total number of pages so that this looks like a substantive book etc., these were a few of the other challenges.

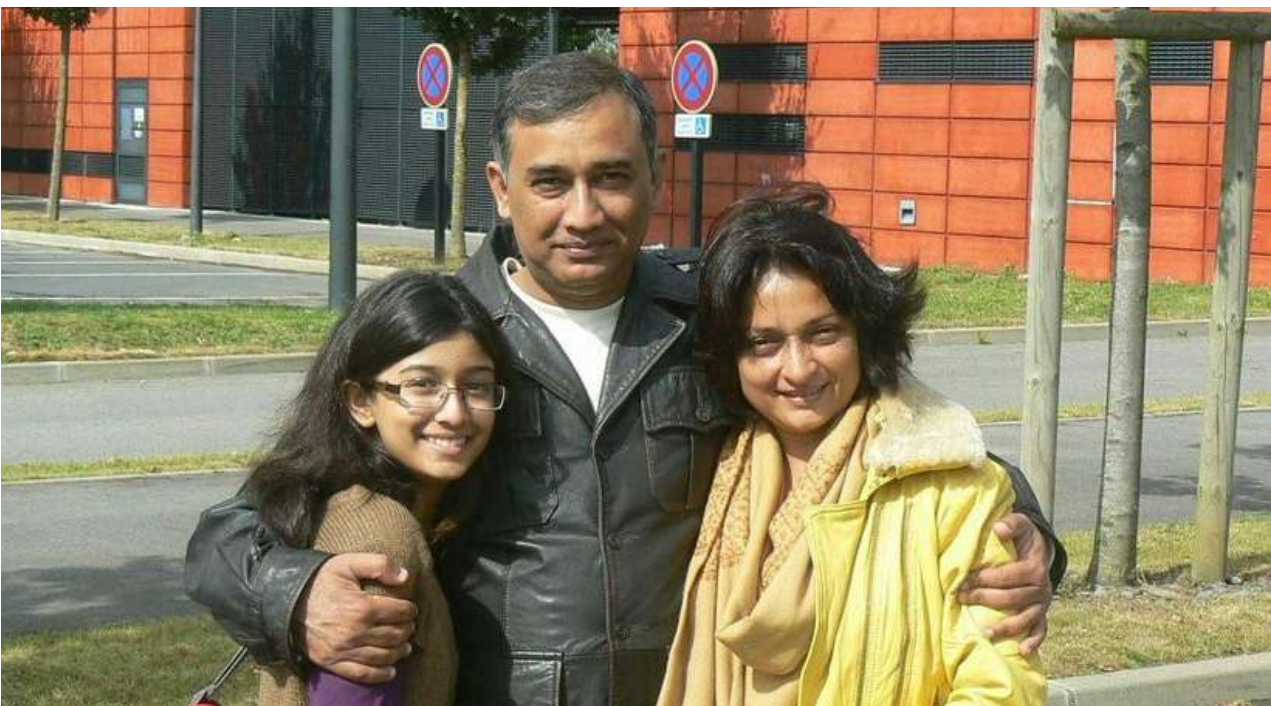
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21	eBook	eBook	Self Publishing	Published	30-May-22	NA	Amazon Kindle
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Mind you all this is happening in parallel. I actually had three files. First was A4 size which had to be converted to 5.5 by 8.5 which is finally the size I had gone ahead with, though I have files formatted in 5 by 8 and 6 by 9 inches size also. Initially it was difficult to make correction in all three in parallel. Then came the challenge of publishing and launching. I am embedding one excel sheet to show where all has the book reached as far as I know till now. It has reached many more retailers as I see online when I search on Google with the string "Shiv Mathur Meditation".

Rajesh: What's your future plans?

Shiv: I plan to put in efforts so that the footprint and visibility of this book reaches far and wide and eyes of the readers. I have another topic "My Spiritual Encounters" for my second book and may be perhaps the last book. I am also planning my next sojourn in the Himalayas. Which is like spending some time like a yogi in a remote place away from the world. Then return to Pune to my parent organization that is my residence.

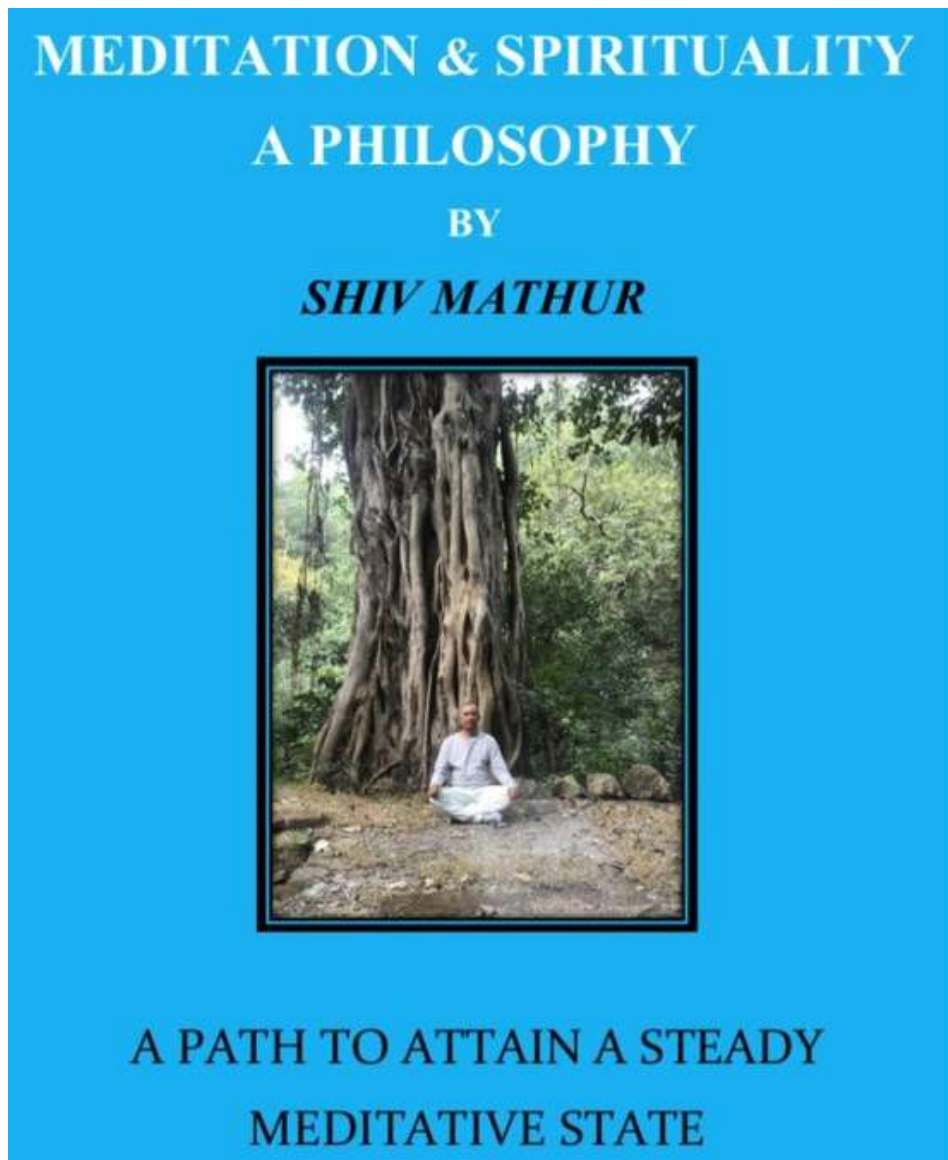
While doing this I have also been trying to take up a job that is purely due to my wife's expectation of my being gainfully utilized or being financially more productive. So I keep trying or at least expecting to be back in some job though this is not what my soul's calling. In my opinion I am good to call myself retired. Though my retirement happened when I completed 53 years of my existence on this planet. Now I am 56 years old. Also my subscribers which are somewhere around 24k on YouTube, many have this expectation from me to make more videos of some realized Yogis. Though I am not keen to surrender to their expectation as I am not in favour of providing a spiritual entertainment to arm chair viewers. I am not doing it for fame or money. It was actually my intention and mission as well as to take this experience for the benefit of the humanity. That's why the videos and that is why this Book.



With Family

Rajesh: For every success there has to be a motivator, who are the people behind your book release success?

Shiv: Not sure whom can I attribute for the success of this book release. I believe in Karma and Dharma and the book also teaches the same in a way. One has to be finally self motivated to follow ones soul's calling and mission of humanity. This book also describes the purpose of human beings on this planet. I believe in destiny which is a result of our own karmas. While my spiritual guidance and inspirations came from various realized yogis and saints from India, like Paramhansa Yoganandsa, Maharishi Ramana, Nisargdutta Guru Maharaj, Shri Yukteshwar Giri, Swami Rama, Swami Vivekananda, Maa Anandamayee, Neemkaroli Baba. I have mentioned about them in my book under references and inspiration. Success is there if one can follow dharma, because success is attaining mental peace whatever you do and wherever you live. Success is not to be defined by someone else for you or you trying to define your success to others. Ultimately I attribute it to my parents and God, as we are just doing and have no clue what will we be doing and what will be happening in future. So idea is to just enjoy the moment.



Rajesh: Suggestions to officers from Forces network if they want to pursue on similar lines?

Shiva: If anyone from Forces Network wants to pursue anything they desire to pursue from the journey of my life, be it spiritual or professional, they are most welcome to contact me. They can also watch my videos on my channel 'shivmathur". They can read this book. They can speak to me on 7977097397, meet me at 2112, Clover Highlands, NIBM, Pune 411048 or mail at shivmathur0903@gmail.com, whatever suits them.

Suggestion is difficult to give. Professionally I followed theory of neutrality and being non political and believe in being a perfectionist and excelling the work you are made responsible for. I also believed in ensuring that the team should be happy and well motivated and then your job will be doubly well done. I believe in truthfulness and being straight forward. No boot licking either way. One should strive to make your work environment a place where there is happiness and joy. Hard work, focused approach helps achieve targets. Also never compromise with your work life balance. Ensure that you don't give a chance to raise a finger at you. Through your hard and efficient work ethics you can achieve that and you can go home in time. I always did that. I never stayed back to show my boss that I am a hard working professional. I was a known performer so I never had to resort to such useless tactics. This way I could enjoy my professional as well as personal life. Finally I would say enjoy every moment of your life and don't just collect for future. When you will look back and see how you lived life then you will probably regret. Life after retirement or after 50 is very different and one's needs and desires become very less.

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Knowledge Byte

The Pastures Across That Hill

BY KRISHNA RAJ

You have been through the Best of times and the worst of times; you've been there, done that; you are a self-made man.. 'Military life is Grist to the Mill for corporate challenges', and You are ready to face it, after all nothing 'outside' is Rocket Science!!

But wait...

For a brief moment let's move to Green from Olive Green. How many of us know that the 'Song of India' is vibrant green leaves with irregular streaks' is an Indoor plant that is popular across the business houses and that it requires a bit of sunlight every day. Nature lovers abound in the Corporate, horticultural ventures are the order of the day and in India Green itself are big business. For many in Uniform or just out of Olive green, having been exposed to Greens of the Golf Course and colors of the Annual Flower shows in pristine cantonments, this greenery is not very familiar.

For those who came in late, it would be worth knowing that the Horticulture aspect is a massive draw in attracting clients and projecting positive Compliances in an international Clientele Audits regime; they accrue a positive approach from Customers auditors who visit Client Plant locations often at short notice.

Opportunity begets business; incidentally with the increasing value of compliances and green norms across the industry, horticulture by itself is much sought-after business for those in the fray.

Enough said about horticulture but we have just touched the tip of the iceberg...

Tweaking the Chetwode Motto

All able Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen are fired with imagination and Zest; but to many, when Seeking Better in life in a world outside Uniform, multiple facets of the Corporate are not just a pretty rainbow arched across their glorious path ahead - one aspect surmounts the other all appearing like a Jigsaw puzzle. Quite a tough Jigsaw to the uninitiated, but could be compared to a solvable mathematical matrix to the well initiated.

Let us go back in time to where the pathfinders laid down Officer credos. Field

Marshal Philip George Chetwode, Commander in Chief of Royal Indian Army 1930, spoke of the Officer Credo at the Indian Military academy that is today engraved on the entrance to the central hall. This passage from his address delivered at the formal inauguration of the Academy in 1932, famously called the Chetwood Motto acts as a guide for all Officers in their line of Duty: -

*The safety, honour and welfare of your country come first, always and every time.
The honour, welfare and comfort of the men you command come next.
Your own ease, comfort and safety come last, always and every time.*

This "Chetwode Motto" initiating Indian Army Officers passing out from the Academy calls out the officers onto a much-envied leadership role.

Cut to the corporate world and it's the Profit Motive that is the central theme, well at least some directions are very clear. Frankly it is a natural process and to say the least "Any Business is Serious Business".

To get to the core of our thought process in this precinct, how can an officer prepare? A possible outlook in the business world for regular self-made officers could be to rephrase and align a retro modified Motto. In the Corporate while "Seeking Better" the Credo that could be useful are -

- The opening of your horizon to the core factors that influence your business comes first always & every time. (Customer, Environment, Core Values of Business)
- Clear focus in your field of work, Collaborative effort, and Technology orientation come next. (Be prepared for impromptu departures).
- Your own ease and comfort come last always & every time; (you put your Profile on Job portals).

New horizons call for renewed perspectives, while this is no 'Agni path' by any comparison, one treading the corporate jungle is an Agniveer of sorts. Future stands by one who embraces logic in whatever he or she does. There are no Golden Pots at the end of the rainbow but certainly chances of you getting your manna begins first with the foray into the unknown.

As the Chinese proverb goes... "A journey of a thousand mile begins with the first step."

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

Over the years, well moulded into the system of armed forces, the officer comes out with a rare set of skills, not all are necessarily business process oriented. In an

offensive you need to know the terrain, the grain and going. Likewise, while stepping into corporate, we need to bolster certain military traits, guard against some military predilections and avoid certain obsessive and compulsive nuances of soldiering.

Here we take on some of 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' as we came across in the 'Soldier to Corporate' frame.

The Good :Certain Hard Core Virtues To Carry Forward

- An eye for Details – a rare trait in civil life that makes you stand out.
- Habit of keeping Deadlines. A task comes with a deadline and the shorter the better- The Corporate loves this virtue.
- Dot on time- and generally waiting patiently for 30 Minutes. You are a role Model.
- The Pongo can spot something out of the ordinary among people within few moments - especially among contractual workers. This virtue honed at the 2IC levels keeps the corporate colleagues in awe of your Security Risk analysis ability beyond 'Excel sheet points'.
- If it's a 'Yes' – it means it is done. Gentleman's promise and the dependability is very high.
- Strong will to persevere, and the will to be able to sit through a storm. If you don't chuck; in all probability you will rarely be handed the pink slip.
- Courage in danger is half the battle won. However, abundance of Courage should be watched over by right perception of the situation.
- Giving a Complement – Goes a long way to better the environment.

The Bad : Certain Telling Military Virtues To Be Avoided

- The Belief that "*I can do it by myself*" followed by- Knee jerk Decisions. This somewhat misplaced idea can result in avoidable embarrassment and landing oneself in a non-retrievable position. Take Advise and consult; tremendous insight intuition and experience goes into business-oriented Decision Making (DM).
- *Seeking single point of authority* in corporate (IO / RO Syndrome)- Local Head may not have full authority in a Promoter driven Organisation. Flexible and liaison-oriented approach is advisable.
- *Seeking Single point execution of Tasks* – One man or agency may not have all the resources or be kitted with budgetary leeway's. – Collaborative activity is recommended. Resourcefulness is the key.
- *Budgetary Fixations – But where is the Budget?* Starting trouble in low budget situations is common. Start off with what you have- Annual outlays could fluctuate based on Finances. so remember well begun is half done.
- *Misnomer* - Old Hats and Other unit's persons don't count much. Underestimating

the value of old hats in a company; even those who have risen high despite lack of qualification is a bad idea. People from Sister concerns of the same Group are stalwarts – don't disregard.

- *Don't Disregard Rumours*- there may be a hidden message for your department or even You; Often, it's a means of communication.

The Ugly : The Never Never Land

- *Taking for granted* the respect received from fellow employees – You are being respected for what you were, please return equal respect.
- *Don't keep people standing*. Give a chair to anyone who comes to get a decision from you, he will execute it with 100% commitment. Have you been to a Govt official and met at a clerical level without introducing your retd rank? if not, you must try.
- *One Size fit all* – since every situation needs a different approach; no resting on early success.
- *"Bash on regardless"*. It is only a Motto; resorting to stop loss is a wise option.
- *Noticing Deformity* -A Military Man immediately notices deformities in people and adds it to his weak perception of the individual. Beware! He may be a wizard at the business end. Wrong personal sizing up curtails your reach in a set up.

M to C Appreciation : When Seeking Better, Think Better.

For the well initiated into the forces and those across the Rubicon bridge of Junior Command and Senior Command, certain perspective of Tactical Deductions can be retro fitted to corporate. Let's navigate...

For those stepping into corporate world it is worthwhile to extend the golden tenets as in a tactical appreciation.

Military	Corporate
Aim (State Clearly) Term of Reference	I. Second Career (SS/20Yrs) age is the Term of reference here. And key to a second career. II. Financial Improvement is an option if you are ready to Skill up and empower yourself. III. Keep pace of life - work for keeping busy. Be prepared to accept moderate salary. IV. Bold dreams of startup – be ready to have an Angel investor. Basic requirement – Age with you and reputed MBA degree from Premier institute. Exec MBA will do.
Key Terrain and Objective (Do you really Need a Job? If so the terrain is vital)	I. Security Services for All Arms II. Administration for All Arms. III. Verticals:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Engineering (Engrs) - Real Estate.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defence TSOC qualified – TQM Total Quality management. IT Sector (Sigs) – IT Risk management Consultancy. Or empower with Forensic diplomas. Logistics- Supply Chain Management: it is commercial Zone. Education- PhD and UGC Net aspirants holders. <p>IV. Own Business – Financial Support Available? Venture Capital or Partnership.</p> <p>V. Equity -The inexperienced to avoid putting Retirement Corpus into speculation.</p>
Vital Ground/Approaches	<p>➤ Empower Yourself</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exec MBA/Ex-Premier institutes. CPP, CFP, NEBOSH. PMP, Projects Law LLB, HR (PGDBA) UGC Net – PhD
Time & Space	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How many years to reach 58 Years Do I Have 8-10 years left. Essential requirement of 10 years residual when stepping out. Minimal financial liabilities. Empower yourself prior to release – takes 5 years. I am at xx age - How far I can plan now ?
Summary of Deduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Should be able to work up to 58 years. How old are you? PMR at 50 plus – Medically size up first. Best option 15 years space. If opting Entrepreneurial – 35 years Focus on the Vertical you intend to join. Empower before release. Keep Two years down for unforeseen medical issues.
Courses of Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Course A – Job as a second career. Course B – Financial fillip to future. Course C -Keep Busy -Time Pass.
Mission + Outline Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Empower for min 3 Years ✓ Plan release correctly. ✓ Read up for good corporate job and create your Job Profile. ✓ Join Corporate / Startup ✓ Plan *** - Backup. ✓ “Stay Invested” – Don’t Quit in a huff
Execute	Challenging terrain of corporates await heroes from uniformed armed forces.

Most of those who retire at ages 54 to 58 years are physically fit, mentally alert and morally straight but nonetheless late. Many rue not leaving in the 45 -50 zone. It's always advisable not to harbour regrets.

If there is an iota of desire to look across the hill, better to move out in time – get busy and avoid falling prey to various lifestyle diseases. It is a natural progression to take up a work option, and those who are committed need to:

- Plan by 35
- Decided by 37
- Empower by 42
- Release by 43

- Join by 44/45
- Consolidate by 50
- Retire by 55

As we close, one is drawn to the poem by Thomas Gray - Elegy written in a country church yard. Which opens with the immortal lines ... “The Curfew tolls the knell of the parting Day...”

In the poem, an unforgettable stanza reads -

*“Perhaps in unexpected spot is laid
Some heart, once pregnant with celestial fire
Hands that rods of empire might have swayed
Or walked to Ecstasy the living Lyre.*



Brig Krishna Raj Nambiar was commissioned into the Army in 1987 into the Artillery, he opted for Aviation training, whereby he had extensive operational tenures in the Arunachal, Nagaland and Ladakh including Siachen Glacier. After DSSC he was Grade 1 Operations officer in Sikkim. As a CO he commanded 193 Medium Regiment in Kashmir valley in CT Operations. He was DS at Senior command Wing Army War College where he had the opportunity to be the coordinator for ‘Decision Making Management sessions’ with IIM Indore. While in service he completed PGD HR and LLB. He is also UGC NET cleared for professor grade. He took premature release in 2017 after commanding two Brigades. In corporate he has served one tenure as a General Manager of an NGO and two tenures as Vice President. He is presently a senior leader at a Port in South India.

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Book Review

The Courage To Be Disliked

How to Free Yourself, Change your Life and Achieve Real Happiness

BY ASHISH TRIVEDI

About the Authors



Ichiro Kishimi lives in Kyoto. He writes, lectures and teaches in psychiatric clinics as a certified counsellor and consultant for the Japanese Society of Adlerian Psychology. He is the translator, into Japanese, of selected writings by Alfred Adler, and he is author of Introduction to Adlerian Psychology, in addition to other books

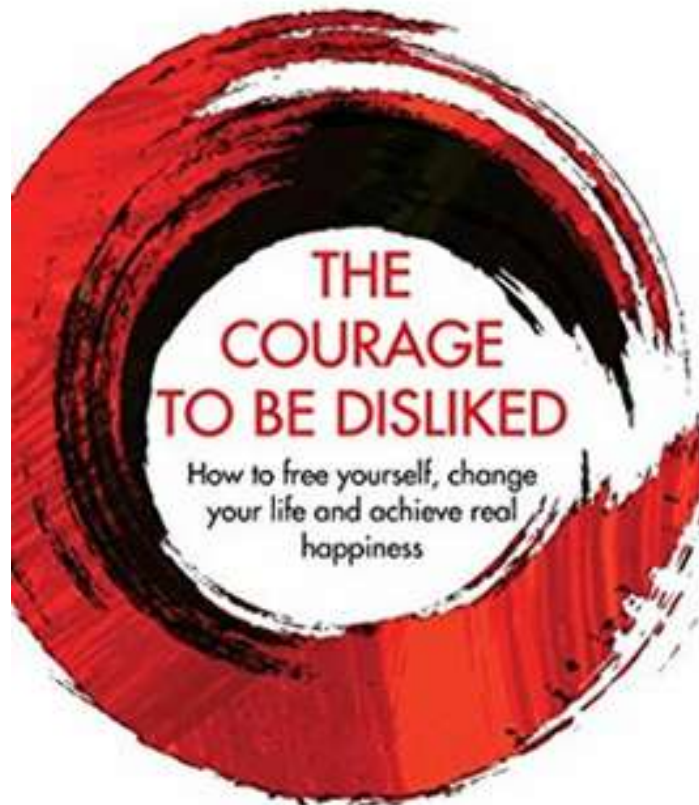
Fumitake Koga, is an award winning professional writer and author. He has released numerous bestselling works of business-related and general non-fiction. He encountered Adlerian psychology in his late twenties and was deeply affected by its conventional wisdom-defying ideas. Koga made numerous visits to Ichiro Kishimi in Kyoto to write this book.

Preface

This book teaches us the simple yet profound lessons required to liberate our real selves and find lasting happiness.

The book provides an accessible overview of the psychology concepts of Alfred Adler – a psychologist from the 19th century. The two authors wanted to make ‘Adlerian’ psychology more accessible and is written as a dialogue through a conversation between a youth and a philosopher.

THREE MILLION COPIES SOLD WORLDWIDE



ICHIRO KISHIMI and FUMITAKE KOGA

The entire book's format is a conversation between a skeptical and somewhat bitter student and a reclusive Philosopher. Throughout the book, the boy undergoes a transition and gets a new outlook on life based on the philosophy of the book. The conversations take place over a number of days and use the conversational manner much like the old Greek philosophers did as a way to present ideas and perspectives.

A lot of the topics discussed are initially around etiology vs teleology. There are two underlying themes throughout the book,

1. The idea that you have a certain issue or problem because of a traumatic event in your past or
2. You are creating your own problems because it serves another underlying purpose. Being confronted with these two options serves as a great reminder to always acknowledge and analyze your emotions and to react consciously. As you delve deeper into this topic you are often left asking yourself if you are looking to find some imagined flaw to serve your current state of emotion. Focus on yourself, you might be looking to find flaws in yourself on purpose...

Some interesting points that personally took my attention.

There is no such thing as trauma. This is quite a controversial point but in Adlerian philosophy there is no such thing as trauma – cause and effect relationships about past life events don't exist. In Adler's words, 'no experience is in itself a cause of our success or failure, we do not suffer from the shock of our experience but instead we make out of them whatever suits our purposes. We are not determined by our experiences but the meaning we give them is self-determining'. In essence, the self is determined not by our experiences but by the meaning that we give them. This philosophy sits in stark contrast to some of the contemporary discussion around issues of trauma but the point that is being made is that we have agency in how we react to events in our lives including trauma.

Our emotions don't happen as a result of things, we have emotions in order to serve our own goals. Emotions are manufactured because we choose to experience those emotions. This framing is opposite to that which we hear more generally.

Unhappiness is something that we choose for ourselves. When we're unhappy we want our circumstances to be different to what they actually are. We are using our circumstances as a justification for our unhappiness. "At some stage in your life you chose to be unhappy, it's not because you were born into unhappy circumstances or ended up in an unhappy situation, it's that you judged the state of being unhappy to be good for you".

One of the points made in the self-help realm about negative emotions is to think about how someone else in that situation would feel given the exact same circumstances. If they would react in a different way, that shows that it's not really the circumstances themselves that are making you unhappy – it's how you're choosing to react to them.

All problems are interpersonal relationship problems. Everything will eventually come down to a relationship issue. The invasion of tasks is the idea that we each have our own tasks and problems arise when people intrude on each other's tasks. There is some nuance to this concept but every interpersonal relationship problem comes from either someone else intruding on a task that is ours or from us intruding on someone else's task.

"All you can do with regard to your own life is to choose the best path that you believe in, on the other hand what kind of judgement to people pass on that choice that is the task of other people and it's not a matter you can do anything about". "Remember the words of the grandmother – you're the only one who's worried about how you look – her remark drives right to the heart of the separation of tasks – what other people think when they see your face, that is the task of other people and is not something you have any control over".

Separation of Tasks

A really interesting concept, that sounds incredibly simple is “the separation of tasks”. It essentially sets out to explain that what other people think about you is their task and that you can’t do anything about it. If you start living your life in a manner in which you hope to get people to like you or for recognition you start living your life for others and neglect your own tasks. This is connected to the idea that all problems are interpersonal (relationship) problems and that once you learn to let go of other people’s tasks, like their opinion of you, and focus on yourself you will free yourself of a lot of unnecessary stress.

A vertical relationship is hierarchical like parent-child, boss-employee. Horizontal relationships, however, put everyone on equal footing.

Viewing other people as your comrades. This is not a political point but is examining the idea that society has constructed a competitive mindset within people but acknowledging and embracing a sense of camaraderie with other people opens up a whole new way of living.

“It does not matter if one is trying to walk in front of others or walk behind them it is as if we are moving through a flat space that has no vertical axis. We do not walk in order to compete with someone – it is in trying to progress past who one is now that there is value”. “When one is trying to be oneself, competition will inevitably get in the way”.

Happiness is a feeling of contribution to something. Happiness is a nebulous concept and has been defined in various ways but if you feel that you are useful to something or someone else, then you are happy and the pursuit of that feeling of contribution is the pursuit of happiness.

Ultimately, the reasons that the book is called the Courage to be Disliked and the point that the authors are making is that, in order to be free, you need to have the courage to be disliked.



Maj Ashish Trivedi is a BE from Nagpur University and was commissioned into 1 Armd Eng Regt from the Officers’ Training Academy. After serving Indian Army for five year and working with few big brands like Bharti Group, Reliance Jio, National Law University, Jodhpur for next 10 years, he started his own venture ‘Fixpapa’. He is based out of Jaipur.

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Book Review, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Author

Leisure

Red Lipstick

BY VIBHUTI MANGAL

Oh, my dear God
Look at her audacity
She is wearing it again
She doesn't listen
She is implausibly adamant
She is too bold you know
Just like her Red Lipstick

She is so impossible
Why does she wear it?
Who does she want to lure?
How can she be so cheap?
It shows her thinking you know
Too away from the normal
Just like her Red Lipstick

Her mother should be ashamed
Her father must not look at her
Who would raise their child like that?
A girl should be in her boundaries
It reflects her character you know
Too hard to be hidden
Just like her Red Lipstick

Oh, there she goes again
In that fancy car she owns
Who cares if she can buy a diamond?
Who would ever want a girl like her?
She is too independent you know
Out of control, glittering entity
Just like her Red Lipstick

She is the one who distracts
The focus of our beloved boys
She is a culprit running loose
The society should leash her
She will ruin them all you know
Putting her touch to the ones too close
Just like her Red Lipstick

Ohh me?? I would never approve
I would smudge it down
Like ways her roaring dreams
I would blend it brown
To keep her spirit bleak
She will exist but in background
Just like her Red Lipstick

She can't become what I couldn't
She can never release my fear in open
How can she be outrageous?
What if she becomes a definition?
She must go to her rightful place
In a societal cupboard, locked and forgotten
Just like her Red Lipstick!



Squadron Leader Vibhuti Mangal is from the Pink City of India. By profession, she is a bizarre amalgamation of an aeronautical engineer and a computer science engineer. She is a National Martial Arts Champion, a trained Skydiver and a certified Pranic Healer. In her leisure time, she loves to paint, skate and daydream. She enjoys her mountaineering adventures as much as she loves to sing on Karaoke. Intelligence, wit, wisdom, courage and compassion is what defines her character. The mantra of her life is- "Some live for pride" and "Help because you can". She can be reached at joinvibhuti@gmail.com

Please provide your invaluable opinion/feedback on this Poem, by clicking/tapping [HERE](#) - Author

Matrimonials

Bride Desired

A suitable match is sought by Wg Cdr Uma Kant Sharma (Retd) for his son. The son was born on 25 Nov 92 at 05.35 AM in Saharanpur (UP) and is 5'11" tall. His educational qualification is B Tech, MBA and undergoing Post graduate Diploma in Project Management from Flemings College, Canada . He was employed with Kuehne+Nagel in Pune as Asst Manager in Supply Chain Division before proceeding to Canada. Presently, he is on Student Visa since pursuing course and also working as Part Time in Walmart. Father is retired from Indian Air Force in Jan 20 and served as District Sainik Welfare Officer, Morena. Presently working as Senior Manager in Delhi and the family is presently settled at Noida (UP). His mother has been teaching/Principal in various Defence/Public schools. Now, she has taken break from teaching. He has one elder sister, who is married to an IITian and settled in Canada. She is also working there as Finance Advisor in Royal Bank of Canada. We are open to all caste and religions. However, preference is a well qualified working girl, who is willing to settle in Canada after marriage. Horoscope matching is a must.

Wing Commander Uma Kant Sharma (Retd) can be reached at +91-9457593879 and umakant65@yahoo.com for additional details.

FOR INFORMATION

The matrimonials are published free of charge in this magazine,

This facility is available to only for the officers from the three Services, serving and retired.

Also for families of deceased officers. You need not be a member of the Forces Network, to avail this facility.

Please fill the form at <https://forms.gle/NdN5pZcUTtb2Qkf46> to submit the details for the matrimonial.

Matrimonials

Groom Desired

A suitable match sought by Commander Akella Mohan, IN(Retd) for his daughter. The daughter was born on 06/03/1995 and is 5'8" plus tall. Her education qualifications is M.Sc Maths and PGD in Data Science. She is employed with Deloitte Hyderabad as Data Scientist. Father is retired and the family is presently settled at Hyderabad. Her mother is a Housewife. She has an elder brother who is a lead Data Scientist with HCL Hyderabad and is married. A boy preferably a PG and well placed, Telugu Brahmin from VV sect working in India, of height 5'11" and above, born between 1990 -1994. The boy's family should be well educated and decent people.

Commander Akella Mohan, IN(Retd) can be reached at akellamohan@gmail.com for additional details.



Match is sought by Brigadier Sanjay Dawar (Retd) for his daughter. The daughter was born on 30 Jul 1989 and is 5 feet 7 inches tall. Her education qualification is PhD in Biological Sciences from Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CSIR), Hyderabad (AP). She is now employed with Med Genome at Bengaluru. Father, after superannuation on 31 Dec 2019, is working as Head - Training and Placement of four Jaypee Universities and Dean of Students, and staying at official accommodation in the campus of Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, Sector-62, Noida 201 309 (One of the four universities). Her mother is a qualified practitioner of Naturopathy and Acupressure. She has a brother who is B Tech in IT and working in a start-up at Sector-62, Noida. A boy is desired who is well educated and settled, teetotaler and preferably vegetarian. The boy's family should be Hindu.

Brigadier Sanjay Dawar, can be reached at 9518629381 and sanjaydawar1961@gmail.com for additional details.



The Forces Network Meets at Pune Yet Again

Names of officers L to R :

Maj Koustubh; Lt Col Jitender; Capt Uday; Capt Rajesh Nair; Lt Col Prashant Nair; Wg Cdr N Maran; Col Sunil

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