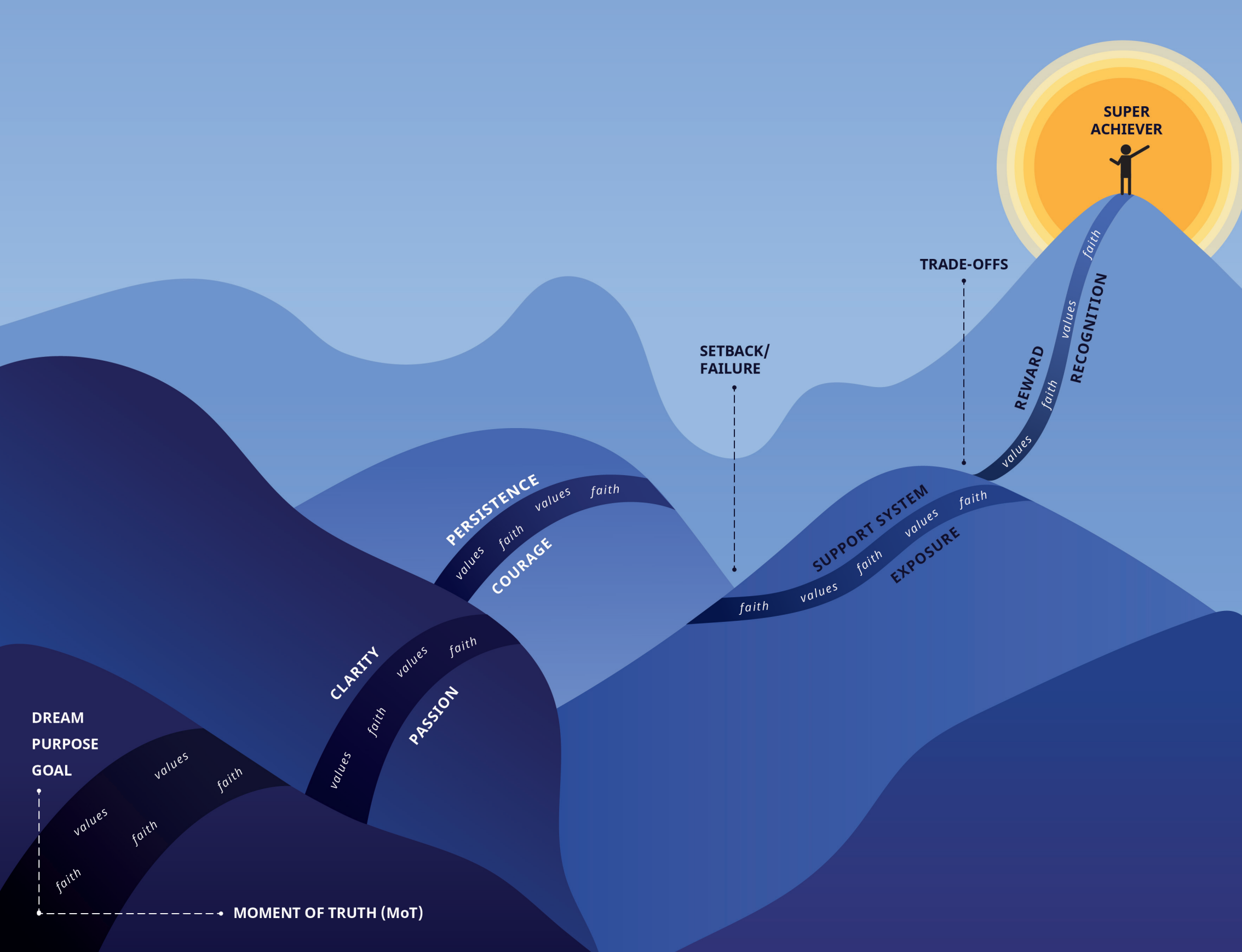




Human Potential OR Capital?

Going beyond the World Bank's Human Capital Project
The Human Potential Framework



**SUPER
ACHIEVER**

TRADE-OFFS

**SETBACK/
FAILURE**

PERSISTENCE

COURAGE

CLARITY

PASSION

SUPPORT SYSTEM

EXPOSURE

REWARD

RECOGNITION

**DREAM
PURPOSE
GOAL**

MOMENT OF TRUTH (MoT)



**The Framework
for Unlocking
Human Potential
is based on
the belief that
Every human
has a unique
potential, and it
can be unlocked.**

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Why a New Framework?

Traditionally, we have followed the Human Capital theory developed by Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz, two economists from the 1960s who argued that education, health, and on-the-job training were investments that might boost productivity.

I believe that human capital is narrow and limited in its approach and based on the theoretical concepts of providing health, education, and skills to realize human capital. If we look at some of the biggest achievers of our times, they came from humble backgrounds and did not have the best of education or health, or skills. Still, they have gone ahead to break the barriers and set up new records in terms of scaling up heights and setting new benchmarks in their respective fields. Till now, the human capital project is the reference point for individuals, organizations, and governments; to provide the best of skills and investments in health and education, but despite doing that, instead of building human capital, what happens, is 'Human Capital Depreciation.' The human potential is brutally crushed most of the time because humans are not machines, and every human is a unique emotional being, and hence 'Real Intangibles*' matter much more, which have not been factored in the Human Capital Project. So, maybe, it is time to consider an alternative approach to the Human Capital project and look beyond.

I have worked with organizations across the USA, U.K, Europe, and other parts of the world, I have served on the committee to draft the New Education Policy 2020, which is often referred to as the breakthrough policy of the 21st century. I am of the firm belief, if we continue with our current understanding of human capital, we will not do justice to our goal of realizing the full potential of every human. As a result, we must consider alternatives and perhaps park, if not dump, the human capital project. Else, we will create individuals who will be frustrated souls, and a 'mid-life' crisis will become a 'mad-life' crisis for every age and every professional! We cannot let human capital depreciate; we need to unlock human potential. So, let us consider this Unlocking Human Potential (UHP) framework - what actually works, the key elements, and what matters most other than - 'Pseudo Intangibles**'.

.....
* *Intrinsic factors or what we refer to as the 'Real intangibles' like the Faith in oneself, Values, Passion, Persistence, Courage and Clarity.*

** *Extrinsic factors like Education, Health and Skills we refer as 'Pseudo Tangibles as one requires an external infrastructure to deliver them.*

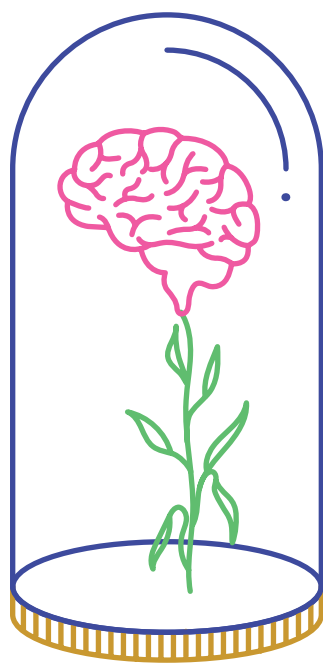
Myself and my colleague Dr. Manpreet Kaur undertook this study and have developed this framework tracking over a thousand years in life years with 32 accomplished individuals across fields, gender, and the globe. This framework will come in handy for a person stuck in the middle of the desert, who looks around and wipes the sweat off the forehead looking at the horizon and thinking – nothing can stop me from reaching and crossing the horizon. This framework can be a compass to navigate the road paved with failures leading to a destination of glory and contentment. Also, it will help you understand the importance of the adage ‘It is nice to be important, but it is more important to be nice’.

A gentle pat on the back, a word of appreciation, and a welcome smile can change someone’s career trajectory forever. Faith in oneself, values, a purpose or a dream are the most valuable and priceless infrastructure that each one has or can invest in and reap the rewards, that the eyes will find hard to believe, and mind will not believe to accept! Remember, invisible investments can create an inerasable glory for the future for someone. Don’t shy, don’t hesitate and chase your dreams – unlock yours and help others unlock their potential.

In 2019, I had coined the term ‘Unique Individual Potential –UIP’ (Gupta, 2020). This Human Potential framework takes UIP to the next level and unveils the framework to unlock the UIP. Let’s use unlock the potential for a happier world. As Marie Curie said, ‘You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals.’

I am immensely thankful to my co-researcher and co-author, Dr. Manpreet Kaur, for the incredible work in building this framework and Dalip Singh for his critique. We wish to put on record our special thanks to the ‘Living Legends’ who accepted our requests to spare time and walk us through their life’s journey and share their inside story. Lastly, our deep heartfelt thanks with appreciation to the World Intellectual Foundation for sponsoring this study.

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta



Human Capital Approach is Self-limiting, Incomplete & Parochial

The concept of development gained currency post-1945 period, shortly after numerous colonies gained political independence. The European system of colonial empires came to an end during this time. And with this evolved the idea of homo economicus: humans as fundamentally economic animals (Bogues, 2020). Amidst this kind of development, the idea of 'Human Capital' also emerged; the importance of people's abilities, knowledge, and competencies to economic growth (OECD, 2007).

According to Theodore Schultz, a pioneer in Human Capital, investment by individuals in themselves, most commonly through improving their education, yields real improvements in personal income and well-being. The quality of human capital is also linked to a country's economic success by raising educational and health standards.

This concept has been advanced in the Human Capital Project by the World Bank. According to World Bank, Human capital consists of the knowledge, skills, and health that people invest in and accumulate throughout their lives, enabling them to realize their potential as productive members of society. And investing in people through nutrition, health care, quality education, jobs, and skills helps develop human capital, which is key to ending extreme poverty and creating more inclusive societies. This led to the development of Human Capital Index (HCI) (World Bank).

The Human Capital project does not cover intrinsic factors or what we refer to as the real intangibles which appear to be far more critical than extrinsic factors or pseudo intangibles. Through this study, we have attempted to dig deeper and see the impact of what matters, the 'Real Intangibles', which may not be measurable by quantifiable terms but can be managed and form an integral part of the Human Potential Framework. The framework developed is universal and sector agnostic, and we propose this framework to unleash the full human potential; their productivity, creativity, and well-being.



History is replete with examples of enterprise without education and ingenuity without proper health. This proves beyond doubt that there are dimensions besides Health & Education which are the deciding factors for unlocking human potential.

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

**Going Beyond
Human Capital -
Human Potential
Approach**

World Bank, through the Human Capital Project, may have wanted their member states to invest in education and health sectors, and we are not sure if they are correct in their approach because everything should not be viewed through the prism of market and material perspective. Moreover, human beings cannot be treated merely as productivity-enhancing machines as they are primarily emotional and spiritual beings! As researchers, we believe in the hypothesis that it can't be just health and education, which counts for realizing the full potential. Otherwise, the best and brightest would have been confined to Ivy league only or families that could afford the best of resources.

History is replete with examples of successful enterprises without even a formal education and ingenuity without proper health. Some of the biggest scientific inventions came from those who did not even have an advanced degree in their field; Wright brothers, Gregor J. Mendel, Charles Darwin, Leonardo Da Vinci, and entrepreneurs who built a fortune out of a modern enterprise didn't have a degree like; John D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Larry Ellison, Michael Dell, Mark Zuckerberg, Mukesh Ambani and Russell Simmons.

Hellen Keller, an American author and disability rights advocate, was deaf and blind and could not speak properly due to an illness that struck her when she was all of nineteen months. But lack of health never stopped her. Stephen Hawking had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) around the age of 21. ALS is an incurable degenerative neuromuscular disorder and is a progressive disease with disabling effects as one advances in age. Despite his ill health, Hawking ended up becoming the leading physicists of all time! Despite being deprived of good education or health, there are many more people who went ahead to do exceedingly well in life. Richard Branson, a dyslexic and a college dropout at the age of 16, went on to become a successful serial entrepreneur with a net worth of \$6.5 Billion. There would be many similar examples across sectors in any city, state, and country. So, for sure, human potential is not just dependent on good education or good health. It depends much more on factors besides education and health. With this premise as a backdrop, we embarked on our research and interviewed super achievers from all walks of life. We found out that most of them; either didn't have the quality education or health services or both as indicated in the definition of Human Capital. So, this was the basis of our consideration of going beyond the understanding of human capital and exploring what matters most in life by tracking super achievers. Looking at the

example of the accident victim who started seeing fractals, it is evident that everything exists within a human mind. All we need is to unlock it. We believe it is time to re-imagine the new paradigm – The Human Potential Approach, as every human being has a Unique Individual Potential - UIP (Gupta, 2020, p. 22). Every human being has unique DNA, iris, and fingerprints, similarly is the potential, and we need to define a framework to unlock this unique potential.



“

A college dropout met with an accident resulting in a concussion. Post that accident, he saw bits and pieces of Pythagoras theorem everywhere. He drew what we saw and his drawings turned out to be mathematically precise. This boy had no training in mathematics. It is like the fractals in his brain wanting to be freed.

Grandin & Panek
(GUPTA, 2020, P. 21)

Impact of the Human Potential Framework

-
- This framework will help people to have a better understanding of what matters in life, identify their destination or a purpose in life and plan to start their journey, understand faith and values, and not get disheartened with losses or setbacks, neither fear insult but take them as a challenge and bounce back.
 - This framework seeks to redefine how we treat people around us - whether they are senior or junior. This will change the human dynamics, relationships, and investment in the right ideas.
 - It will help people strategize and prioritize what finally matters in life as one of our interviewees said, 'without spirituality and values, even successful people would feel unsuccessful'.
-

Unending Frontier of Human Potential!

ARCHITECTING YOUR DESTINY

William James, famous psychologist and philosopher, in his speech “The Energies of Men” (1906), said - *“The human individual thus lives usually far within his limits; he possesses powers of various sorts which he habitually fails to use. He energizes below his maximum, and he behaves below his optimum. In elementary faculty, in co-ordination, in power of inhibition and control, in every conceivable way, his life is contracted like the field of vision of a hysteric subject”.*

This concept of ‘potential’ and ‘potential in humans’ has been explored and studied by great minds for centuries, only to conclude that we “The Human Beings” are given with “Infinite Potential,” and it is “us” who fail to “use” or “maximize” it. From Aristotle, an ancient Greek philosopher, to Swami Vivekananda (Great Indian social reformer), all have believed that the potential makes us exceptional, and failing to use it would be nothing but a waste of our lives. The manifestation of “Energy” or “Potential” is only possible through the inside-out route and not the other way around. Aristotle, in the analogy of acorn and oak tree, offers a good analogy for human potential. Like an oak tree that grows from an acorn when provided the right and stimulating environment (soil, temperature, etc.) realizes the inherent potential and becomes an oak tree.

Similarly, every human carries a potential that lies dormant unless given the right conditions. The growth and development of potential is the ultimate human purpose to fulfil our destinies and not the growth and development alone or moving in silos. The “holistic development” is nothing but the “realization” and “manifestation” of inner abilities and potential. *And it is not wrong to say that the most precious resource on the globe is not human but the potential of every human being.* The ability to believe and dream is the most remarkable human quality, yet when we look for things outside of ourselves, this does not translate into reality. Human beings are propelled ahead by their inner selves – The potential. As one of our subjects rightly said, ‘there is no limit to one’s potential, you can reach as far as you can envision’.

TO 'DESIRE' IS HUMAN

From the psychology perspective, human potential is a term that has been used frequently in the humanistic psychology paradigm. This branch of Psychology propounded that humans are unique entities who should be recognized and treated as such. Early Humanistic Psychologists (Maslow and Rogers) claimed that people have an intrinsic desire to grow and develop. The 'Desire' could be apparent or latent depending on the 'build' of an individual, and it is important to understand that everyone has a unique potential and a unique reason for existence, for some, the desire shows up and for some, it has to be ignited. Then, only one realises the full potential. This desire will lead them to actualize their human potential, which is to become all that they are capable of.

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Kurt Goldstein coined the term 'self-actualization' to describe the idea that people have an innate drive to realize their greatest potential. And this innate drive is seen as a key motivator.



***Self actualization is about planning your
journey and it does have a
starting point and a destination.***

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

While Goldstein defined self-actualization as an inner force that motivates people to fulfil their full potential, Maslow saw it as a more moderate propensity for people to become actualized in what they are capable of becoming (Gleitman, Gross, & Reisberg, 2011).

Maslow, a world-famous social psychologist, personality theorist, and comparative psychology expert, identified the source of the human desire to grow and propounded the theory of 'self-actualization.' According to this theory, we all are motivated by a hierarchy of needs with the ultimate need to fully realizing our potential i.e., self-actualization. It can be summarized in a simple model: A pyramid of needs - Basic needs are met through acceptable behaviour, which leads to more wants and satisfaction. The final need is the realization of one's value (self-actualization is the vertex of the pyramid).

“

***But out of this sorrowful experience
I understand more clearly all human
striving, thwarted ambitions, and infinite
capacity of hope.***

Hellen Keller

The authors of this study conclude that realizing one's actual-self or self-actualization is a journey and it does have a starting point and a destination. Even when one discovers life's highest purpose or goal, the process of self-actualization doesn't end but goes on till it is completed.

Everything psychology has to say about human potential, one thing is certain; we are all capable of accomplishing great things in life, of making the impossible possible, all through one underlying power - Our Potential. And everyone should develop according to their potential-focused on creativity, spiritual enlightenment, the pursuit of knowledge, or a desire to contribute to society.

Why, if we all have the potential and desire to self-actualize, do most of us fail to use it and, more importantly, fail to recognize the intrinsic power that, when paired with the finest of education, infrastructure, and environment?

What are the hurdles that prevent people from realizing their whole self?

To understand, we need to examine how we see human potential and individual development in modern society. The study arrived at building blocks that unlock human potential and attempted to decode the basic tenets of human potential through personal interviews. The interviews were conducted face to face and virtually (Zoom and Telephonic) with individuals who began with nothing and lived in deprivation but overcame all odds and have gone on to make a name for themselves in their field, transforming sectors or reaching the top in their field. The selected super-achievers were from academia, health, administration, politics, business, arts, and social sectors. They hail from different regions of the world. The methodology included interviews based on a structured questionnaire.

The transcripts of thirty-two interviews were carefully studied to understand the factors that enabled selected super-achievers to realize their full potential, and a three-level Human Potential framework has been developed.

The Three-level Framework to Unlock Human Potential

The three-level framework was developed based on our study and arrives at twelve factors that are critical to unleash the full potential. These are further divided into seven intrinsic and five extrinsic factors.

CORE I

In three-level framework, intrinsic factors form the 'Core'. This is a must-have! The first one is, having the dream, the second and equally important is to have faith in oneself and values. Those who are successful have a strong foundation of faith and values.

CORE II

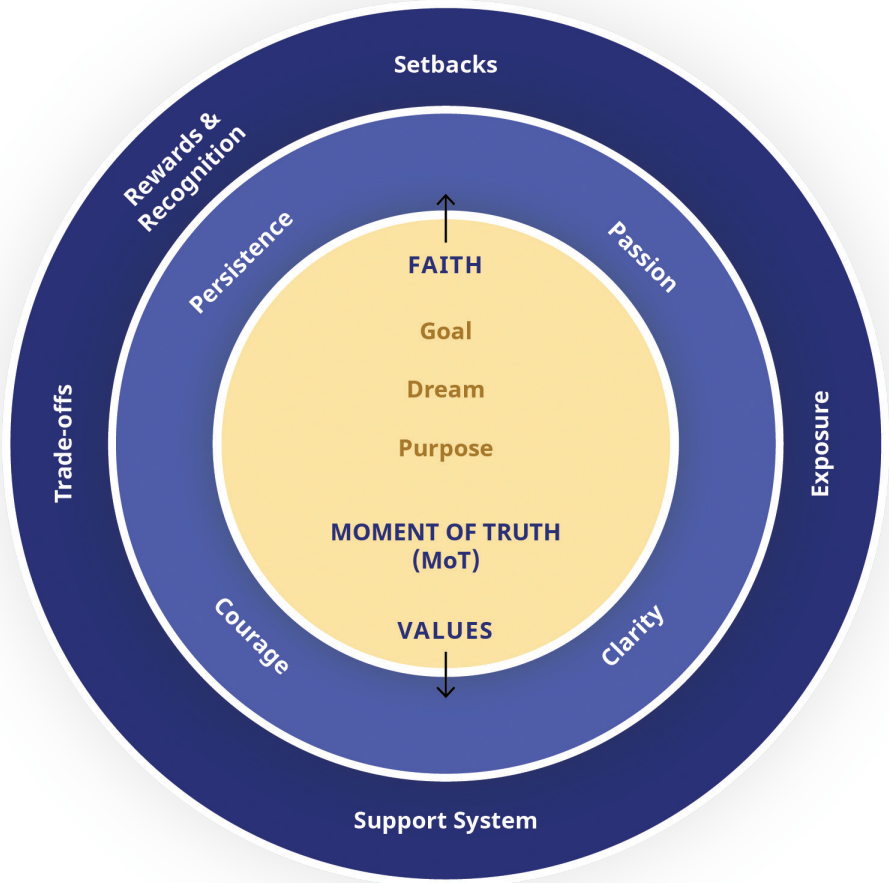
Core I is followed by the next level of intrinsic elements – Courage, Clarity, Persistence and Passion (2C2P), which is the Core II.

EXTERNAL FORCES

The external forces or factors like Exposure, Setbacks, Trade-offs, Support system, and Rewards and Recognition. Among these, Setbacks are the headwinds as one cannot avoid flying at the high altitude, however, taking the route of trade-offs (navigating the headwinds) coupled with diverse Exposure and a broad Support System, one can brace any hurdle and emerge as a winner. These are complementary and have an important role as well.

THE UNIVERSAL ANCHORS – INTRINSIC OR EXTRINSIC

Given our in-depth discussions with leaders and tracking their life's journey and analysing the situations and how they handled, we arrived at the conclusion that internal factors i.e., Core I and Core II are actually the universal anchors, which have a key role in making or breaking one's dream or goal. As one runs into a tough or an adverse situation, the response which is based on the core factors – those who lack the core can end up breaking - down and shattering their achievements.



Core I

Core II

External Factors

***So, the core is the desire i.e., dreams,
goals and purpose built on a strong
edifice of internal and external forces.***

***Core I and Core II are the universal
moorings along with external forces or
factors which establish the fertile ground
on which one's dream and potential (seed)
can grow and flourish***

Success Vs Full Potential – What Defines Super-achievers

When it comes to defining success, we are all at a crossroads. What is success for us? What is it for successful individuals? Is it the large sum of money, a prestigious job, following one's inner calling or a bigger purpose, graduating from the Ivy League, spending more time with family, or working for the communities or social causes? Traditionally, we define success as a "favourable or desired outcome" (Merriam-Webster) or "The attainment of fame, wealth, or social status" (Oxford). However, it is not so plain and simple. Success is an abstract and subjective concept. What enormous success means to one individual might not mean the same to another. Everyone has their own interpretation of the term - Success. For a student, success may entail passing all of the semester's classes; for a businessman, signing a significant deal and making a large sum of money; and for a president, guiding the country to development and ensuring that the people have a better life.

Tesla Motors CEO Elon Musk's success cannot be compared to the Noble Laureate Kailash Satyarthi's. The definition of success for an author cannot be applied to a scientist working in a laboratory 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. What Elon Musk, Kailash Satyarthi, a best-selling author, and an industrious scientist have in common is that they are all living their full potential. Anything less than that is not acceptable to them. Their inner self connects with their environment in a complete circle – Unlocking Potential. The true meaning of success is known only when one's full potential is realized and utilized - key to a contented life.



Success with fully realized human potential is about a fully lived life, and in simple words 'A Contented Life'.

Dr. Manpreet Kaur

Goal | Purpose | Dream

Our study reveals that to break the barriers and reach dizzy heights or achieve the peak, one needs to have a goal, a purpose, and higher the goal stronger the resolve and easier to overcome the challenge that comes in the way. So, the 'seed' is having a big goal, a purpose, and one may call this a dream.

While it is great to have a clear goal but it is not necessary that one may be exact or precisely clear about a definite goal one wants to achieve. A few of our subjects had unique things to share about their clarity of goal.

1. One subject wanted to be in America because he heard U.S. President John F. Kennedy say, 'In a decade, we will send a man to the moon and bring him back.' The person decided to embark on an uncertain boat journey across continents to reach America. This person came from a family of carpenters and blacksmiths with eight siblings and didn't have enough resources to travel to the USA by Air.
2. Another subject was fancied by mobile phones and wanted to do a business in technology. He ended up being a business head of a large enterprise, a quantum leap from being a canteen boy.
3. Yet another subject was not clear about this goal but wanted to do something big and today, the person is amongst the top in a first world country, and at one time, he sold his only two-wheeler to buy a one-way ticket to a western nation, and is today a top entrepreneur and a deputy mayor of a prominent capital city of the world.
4. Fourth subject didn't even complete an undergraduate degree and gave a walk-in interview for a pharmaceutical company and ended up becoming the CEO of that company and transforming it into a global enterprise. He just wanted to do something big despite not having the required qualifications.

Most people we interviewed had a clear purpose and goal, but some did not know exactly what they wanted to achieve, but broadly, their goal and purpose were decided, and they were clear about it. So, it is important to plant the 'seed'.



***Strong Inner power (self confidence)
will trump the most stubborn external
obstacles, like the flowing water makes
way through the mountains, and the wind
that uproot the trees***

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

For Victor E Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor, he founded meaning in three places: purposeful work, love, and fortitude in adversity. In the concentration camp, during the second world war, Frankl observed that inmates have a better chance of surviving if they have a goal or purpose to look forward to.

We are all born with a mission. Each of us is a distinctive personality and has a unique set of abilities. Our abilities and capabilities have been sculpted for a specific purpose and goal. We make better choices and decisions when we find our purpose. Without a goal, the potential is squandered or remains untapped. Dreams and goals help you to be yourself, perform exceptional work, and gradually transform society.

“

Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment that demands fulfilment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated. Thus, everyone's task is unique as is his specific opportunity to implement it.

Victor E Frankl, "Man's Search for Meaning"

MOMENT OF TRUTH

In our study, we came across individuals who were not clear about harbouring a specific goal, but when asked an incisive question, they set out to define and achieve that goal. One of the subjects we studied was once asked a question; 'What do you want to do in life', which encouraged the person to introspect and sketch the goal. The same person was later featured amongst the 30 super achievers in a first-world country. Similarly, an academician sought favor from his friend to enrol a student in physics class, and he was sarcastically told, "I have a six-month waitlist, I am a physics teacher and do not teach a subject like yours which can be handled with rote learning". This egging motivated the academician to teach the physics teacher a lesson by setting up an educational institute, which emerged as a benchmark-setting enterprise valued at billion dollars. So, while sometimes, such insults or incisive questions may appear disrespectful, but if the core is engrained firmly (Faith and Values), such posers or setbacks will lead to self-introspection, self-actualization and influence a person to get more determined and stronger. It will become a moment of truth for a call to action!



***Purpose is a path that helps people stay
focused and accomplish what they were
born to achieve.***

Dr. Manpreet kaur

Faith

Theoretical or dictionary definition of faith is “strong belief or trust in someone or something” or “belief in the existence of God: strong religious feelings or beliefs” (Merriam-Webster). What we are referring here is ‘faith in oneself or self-confidence’. Almost all our subjects interviewed stated that they had faith in themselves to succeed and hence they were able to take risks and taken the uncharted path (non-conformists).

The age-old clichés – “Everything will work out if you believe in yourself” or “Be patient and believe in the process” are all examples of faith. As Swami Vivekananda has said, *“Throughout the history of mankind, if any motive power has been more potent than another in the lives of all great men and women, it is that of faith in themselves. Born with the consciousness that they were to be great; they became great”*. Faith is the inner confidence that makes one believe in their abilities, skills, and growth. Faith is like mother soil in which seeds of goal, dreams and purpose are planted.

Self-faith or self-belief is the source of strength when every attempt in the pursuit of success starts to fail. It implies that you never give up on your dreams and goals. Those that believe in their dreams, goals, and major purpose in life will not let anything stand in their way. They can overcome any impediment in their journey to success. Everything is possible when you have faith in your own self.

“

Leap and the Net will appear.

John Burroughs

Faith denotes a reasonable sense of certain expectancy. It is an inner resolve, confidence, and hope that propels the bravery to act, to go on the adventure of starting something new. One of our subjects told us, 'He was not fluent in English and studied in vernacular language, but he asked himself a question – why am I here? People call me dumb. Am I useless? and he decided that he was not dumb but intelligent and taught himself English and became the best national English debater for three years in a row, and finally, he was listed as the cover of Time Magazine amongst the '100 Young Global Leaders'.

The thirty-two super-achievers we interviewed had their share of setbacks; a few had to start over from the beginning, while others had delays in their undertakings; but, despite this, they all believed in their own abilities and potential. They refused to give up and kept the hopes alive, the hope of making it someday. Faith was the driving force behind all they did, and it played a critical role in their growth.

“

***Faith is like your best companion;
through life's peaks and valleys, it is your
all-weather friend.***

—

Dr. Manpreet kaur

“

***“Faith is a force multiplier and self
appreciating asset the more the faith,
the higher and faster one can grow”***

—

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

Values

Once a person has a purpose, a goal, the next thing that matters is a faith built on a value system. It is likely that the ride will be a roller-coaster ride, and there will be ups and downs. What will keep you going is the value system. Values serve as a compass for faith, as well as a steering wheel for one's conduct. In the pursuit of success, unethical use of one's potential can lead to undesirable consequences.

Our study validated through extensive interviews that despite a setback or a failure, the faith in oneself and the value system act as a springboard to move again after a fall rather than changing track and drop in the middle of the journey.

In the value system, to have an orientation to bring positive results with work and action is considered most important. It brings actual change in society, which ultimately aligns with the higher purpose of such individuals. So, they are not just limited to their achievement but also their contribution to the world.

Successful people imbibe and learn values from their SUPPORT system, upbringing, the lives of their role models, great leaders or religious philosophy. Also, their humble background greatly helps in learning the values early in life. We looked at all the thirty-two legends and realized that the following values were the common denominator among all of them.



Hardwork - Discipline



Perpetual Optimists



Resilience



Non-Conformists



Positive Impact

Passion

Literal definition of passion is “a very strong feeling of love, hate, anger, enthusiasm, etc.” (Oxford), or “something that you are strongly interested in and enjoy” (Cambridge)

Any excellent work necessitates passion. Purpose dies an unnatural death when it lacks passion. We’ve all heard the phrase “Passion fuels Purpose.” i.e., dreams and hopes are kept alive by the fire in the belly.



There is no passion to be found playing small - in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.



Nelson Mandela

Those who aim to make it big have this intrinsic desire to achieve and breathe their goal day in and day out. It becomes their passion. This ensures that they love their work and don’t get tired of putting in extra effort and time. This is an important qualifier for becoming a legend in your field. One of our subjects who did an MBA from a premier institute didn’t pursue a job in the sector but became an emcee, and is today, rated amongst the top. She followed her dream with passion. Another subject who is an avid gamer and entrepreneur stated that ‘I love video games, I am passionate about it. I have never thought of it as a business. It is my love’. This super-achiever sold his first gaming company for about 100 million USD almost two decades ago and has started another innovative gaming company. If one has passion one can spend hours doing what one loves without getting tired, and this is a key dimension for super-achievers. So, it is important to follow what one is passionate about.

Clarity

Literal definition of clarity is “the ability to think clearly or understand things clearly” (Macmillan) or “Clarity is the ability to think clearly.” (Collins)

Clarity is about clear articulation and focus on one’s goal. It’s similar to having a coach who directs your energy, determination, and efforts. One of our subjects told us that he wanted to be in music, and his parents were against this idea and got him enrolled in an engineering course. Since he was clear what he wanted, he finally went back to his dream, and the music album he contributed to, went on to become a Grammy award winner. We had the other extremes as well where people did not have clarity, but strong on values, faith, support system with mentors, and this person rose to the top and now leads an organization with a market capitalization of USD 1.7 trillion. Another rag to riches story entrepreneur stated, ‘There are two kinds of people, one who has succeeded and the other could not focus.’ In our study, we realized that it was not just the clarity of the purpose but, most importantly, it was about the vision with focus.

Persistence

Literal definition of persistence is “the quality that allows someone to continue doing something or trying to do or something even though it is difficult or opposed by other people” (Merriam-Webster) or “the attitude or behaviour of someone who continues to do, or try to do, something in a determined way” (Macmillan)

To keep the purpose or goal alive, being persistent in efforts is essential. Persistence means to put in long hours, sweat, and sacrifice luxuries for the greater good or, in simple words, to show determination. Along with determination, it brings single-minded focus and the ability to devote all of one’s energy to a single goal. It is the willingness to make sacrifices to do what you enjoy. Persistence, in our study, means going beyond being serious and actually putting your time, efforts, and money in pursuit of a goal. One of our subjects was so dedicated to the objective that he only brushed his teeth once a week to save time for the target he had set for himself. One example our subject narrated was shaving the head meant that the subject would not need to spend a lot of time on the hair. So, the head was shaved to save the goal – determination.

Courage

Courage is interchangeably used with bravery, and it may be rightly so. However, in our study, the word courage had a broader context. One subject took a tough decision to leave a cushy job till retirement and boot-strapped to start a venture and recently sold it off for a billion dollars. Same with another subject who realized that it is enough to work for someone and left a well-paying job and started his own venture in a small room. He recently made a billion dollars exiting that business. It takes courage to 'seize the moment' when the time comes.



*To realise the goal, one has to recognize
and seize the moment as it arrives.*



Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

It is important that once the time comes and the opportunity knocks at the door, one has enough courage to 'seize the opportunity' and embark on the journey to realise one's potential. The key lies in 'understanding the opportune time' and having the 'courage' to 'encash' the opportunity. Courage brings us to the next logical factor, the trade-offs.

Trade-offs

We often use the term “trade-off” to refer to a situation that requires a “sacrifice” - that is, something must be “given up.” So, when someone says we have to make trade-offs, they usually imply that one must make compromises to achieve great heights. While in reality, it may not be an ‘unethical compromise,’ but trade-offs are not unusual, it is a norm and is normal- part and parcel of the journey. One pays as one goes in life, and this is not philosophical, but an experience that all our subjects accepted that we need to leave the runway to fly, and so if we are not accepting trade-offs, we are not marching towards the goal.

What came out of the study is that it is a theoretical notion best expressed as that all choice is basically a form of exchange. In this context, “trade-off” refers to the idea that in any choice, there is always a dimension of value in terms of the options we face and may be compared as more, less, or equal. The choice is “rational” just insofar as it directs us to what is preferred (Bromley, 2002).



***Trade offs are the pathway to
achievement and the price of success. It is
a norm and is normal.***

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

Consider the options you forego and the opportunities you pass on; it is not a loss of possibilities as many believe; rather, it is an 'exchange' for a bigger and better opportunity. Consider the airplane taking off the ground, it would be a great run with 150 miles per hour on the ground, but until it leaves the runway, it will not fly, same with the caterpillar in its transformation into a butterfly.

Life presents us with numerous options, and we must choose amongst them because we cannot have everything we desire. In fact, we must make decisions that involve costs and trade-offs. These expenses aren't only financial; they can also be social and emotional (Caceres-Santamaria, 2019).

Of all, there are 'Regular Trade-offs' and 'One-off trade-offs.' To achieve larger goals, Regular or lesser trade-offs are made daily. These trade-offs are frequently overlooked, yet they have a far more significant impact than one-off or major trade-offs, which at times could be a make or break in the journey. In our study, most super-achievers recalled the one-off trade-offs but dismissed the daily choices as trade-offs.



Life is not a balancing act; if you don't do trade-offs, you will never be able to stand higher from the ground.

Dr. Manpreet kaur

PERPETUAL OPTIMISTS

What distinguishes successful people from unsuccessful people is that they all accept trade-offs without regrets i.e., they are perpetual optimists and they never look at life from the rear view mirror. For them, trade-offs are never sacrifices, but rather sensible choices that push all of them closer to their goals and dreams. Trade-offs are more than a balancing act between things in one's immediate external environment. It's more about mindset and arranging tasks in priority order. In fact, the respondents were asked if they felt they missed something and were given a chance to go back in time and change something; all of them responded that they would not change anything. One super-achiever said initially that he regretted that perhaps he could have spent more time with family. But when he was reminded, would it be possible to have time with family and the current position? He admitted that perhaps, it would not have been possible to have both. So clearly, our study concluded that we have to make way for some things and clear some in our path to move ahead, and what is often referred to as trade-offs are actually the choices we make, the turns we take to reach the destination of our goal. Because life is not a balancing act; if you don't do trade-offs, you will never be able to stand higher from the ground.

PREMIUM ON TIME

Time is the most valuable resource, and there is an 'Opportunity Premium' on time. If you don't invest your time in work, you can invest in something else. So, there will be competing priorities, and one would put the premium on time at hand and invest wisely on the key goal – the big goal. This will become a key determinant and will always have a dimension of trade-off. But all the subjects we interviewed put a premium on how they invest their time productively and for personal – family.

Translating Potential into Reality - The Role of Rewards, Recognition - Motivation

Motivation is defined as “a set of processes concerned with the force that energizes behaviour and directs it towards attaining some goal” (Baron & Greenberg, 1983). Motivation and elements that act as motivators is a highly debatable topic that has drawn the attention of researchers from around the globe. Motivator for a student, employee, freelancer, or an entrepreneur might differ, as can the impact of each factor. It can be money, a relationship, a lucrative career, popularity, or power. However, according to the findings of the UHP, reward and recognition play a significantly larger role.



Tangible rewards are ‘material’ and have a limited shelf life, and fades over time but the intangible ‘Recognition’ is ‘emotional’ and connects at a much deeper level, and the impact deeply and lasts much longer.

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

Neuroscience has a well-established explanation for the complex link between motivation and reward. When the brain is exposed to a reward, the neurotransmitter dopamine is released, which governs the brain’s reward centers. It then establishes an action-reward cycle, which means that person is encouraged to repeat acts that are rewarded.

The role of rewards and recognition in motivation is accepted and implemented in a multitude of sectors.

According to Fredrick Herzberg, a pioneer in motivation theory (motivator-hygiene theory), contented that *“Powerful motivator in our lives isn’t money; it’s the opportunity to learn, grow in responsibilities, contribute to others, and be recognized for achievements.”*

In 1959, in his original work, *The Motivation to Work*, Herzberg identified two factors that influence job motivation: hygiene factors that demotivate when they are unsuitable and motivators that maintain the efforts. He also identified the sources of satisfaction, including a sense of accomplishment, recognition, the work itself, the ability to assume responsibility, and career opportunities.

Rewards and recognition have long been recognized as effective motivators for students, employees, and employers alike.

Recognition, a standing ovation, and verbal appraisals have been found to be more effective than tangible rewards such as monetary incentives, awards, and so on. The need for tangible acknowledgments fades over time, whereas the desire for intangible appreciation and recognition remains constant all through life.

Our study highlighted and concluded about the role of Reward and Recognition as critical factors for boosting chances of success, and it provides the fuel for sustained efforts to go beyond the normal efforts. In fact, our subjects informed us that recognition mattered more than the material rewards. In our study, one of the top achievers from the USA revealed how ‘a smile’ and ‘appreciation’ made the respondent feel welcomed and motivated to start a journey. This brings us to a more important message for all leaders and team members. You never know the potential of your colleagues, and it is better to respect and make them feel welcomed and important, as it is likely to add to their overall positive feelings and motivation for positive reinforcement to work and deliver more. In our analysis of all the subjects whom we interviewed; it was clear that;

INTANGIBLE RECOGNITION > TANGIBLE REWARDS

SUPPORT System

A person's family is their initial learning environment in this world, it is one of the most important factors in their success (Schor, 1999). Family is the smallest social group, and it is also the first group of people that teach about life's foundations. They, for example, teach about life's norms and values and what is right and wrong.

In today's families, economic and emotional support are the typical family roles (Canavan, Dolan, & Pinkerton, 2000). A family's economic functions are critical to children's success; parents' financial support broadens the child's educational and social prospects. Another essential variable in motivating people to attain their goals is emotional support from family. Individuals surrounded by the love and warmth of family are more likely to be happy and achieve their targets. Family also provides a natural setting in which ethical and cultural values are realized.

Family plays a critical role in social development and constitutes the basic and essential building block of society. Families give material and non-material care and support to their members, from children to the elderly or those who are ill, shielding them from adversity to the greatest extent feasible (International Federation for Family Development (IFFD), 2017). One of our subject's motivation was her girlfriend, and he stated that she had been a wonderful support for his achievement.

Every subject we interviewed attributed their success to the support extended



Spouse/GF/BF



Unknown



Parents



Peers



Organization



Role Model



Teacher

by the family. Family can encourage you to achieve things you wouldn't do on your own, which is one of the reasons why family is closely tied to success later in life. Family is always there for you, and it teaches you how to look after others. The first reason family is linked to success is that it might drive you to accomplish things you wouldn't normally do. An empirical study on the relationship between family and entrepreneurship typically suggests that family plays a significant role in entrepreneurs' start-up behavior and success (Eddleston & Powell, 2012).

Whenever an individual's internal system fails, his external system comes to its rescue. The SUPPORT system and its resources serve as a guiding light and help equip a person born with insufficient resources to support and grow their potential. Parents, peers, spouses, a boyfriend or a girlfriend, teachers, organizations, and occasionally friendly strangers make up the SUPPORT system.

Social support is defined as the perception or experience that one is loved and cared for by others, esteemed and valued, and part of a social network of mutual assistance and obligations (Wills & Ashby, 1991).

Within this SUPPORT system, the value system and faith that the present study contends forms the individual's core begin to take form. And this formation continues for the rest of their life. Family, friends, and teachers create a foundation for learning in childhood. Values are transferred, and faith is strengthened in this system. Teachers create confidence in students, allowing them to develop the motivation, grit, and perspective necessary to pursue 2C2P later in life. Other influences, such as friends, spouses, organization/workplace, and role models, come into play later in life.

The benefits from each SUPPORT element play a different function and impact on individual's motivation. Achievers agree that the ultimate happiness comes from family acknowledging and recognizing their work, including their spouse and children. The appreciation from family stays influential throughout life. Intangible recognition from the SUPPORT system has a more significant influence than monetary or quantitative rewards. Productivity, inventiveness, and enthusiasm are all boosted by these intangible rewards.

SELF-DISCOVERY BY STRANGERS & STRANGE QUESTIONS

Strangers or unknowns play a restricted role, yet they nonetheless impact the existing scope of work. Nice welcoming acts that strengthen an individual's acceptability perception within the community lead to a rise in self-assurance. Strangers' probing queries or incisive questions might sometimes set off a series of events that eventually leads to the discovery of Purpose and Passion. One subject, accepted that it was one of the interactions with a stranger and a question that he asked, 'What do you want to do in life? This made her turn to introspect and decide a goal, and made it to the top people in the country in the field – Super achiever.

ROLE MODELS

Role models serve as a source of inspiration and a continual reminder that everything is possible and that success is within reach. However, unlike strangers, role models have a restricted purpose that operates over a limited time span. One of our subjects took inspiration from a book gifted to him on a prominent social reformer, and that led him to break the ceiling given his social and economic status, and has gone ahead to do exceedingly well in life. Another subject informed that the role models were virtual and from the cinema. This subject got inspired by film characters and then determined to set and achieve challenging goals. Finally, this subject sold the enterprise for a billion dollars.

SUPPORT System provides a secure space and safe environment to introspect and sometimes ask critical questions; "What do you want to do" "Where do you want to be" etc.

Setbacks - Milestones to Success

One of our subjects stated, *If I hadn't been through 364 days of disappointment, I wouldn't have gotten that one SUCCESS.* You cannot succeed without failures.

Failure and its impact on motivation and long-term goal achievement have remained a topic of interest for a very long time. According to a set of studies, failure demotivates an individual and predicts a negative association between failure and success, whilst another set of research findings shows a positive correlation, i.e., failures increase determination and ensure an individual's long-term success. Back in 2010, "CV of failures" published in Nature by Melanie Stefan of the University of Edinburgh stated that C.Vs (Curriculum Vitae) of failure can help you realize that failing is a normal part of life and not something to be ashamed of (Stefan, 2010).

Also, Early-career setbacks had substantial, contradictory consequences, harmed some careers but, interestingly, strengthened others' achievements (Wang, Jones, & Wang, 2019).



***I was never afraid of failure; for I would sooner
fail than not be among the greatest.***

John Keats

Failures or setbacks are common, normal, and we all have faced them. All the people interviewed stated they've had failures at some point in their lives and are important because they give people the strength to bounce back and pursue their passion projects with greater zeal. They are the breakthroughs rather than speed breakers for successful individuals. How successful people find the will and power to rise back up after major setbacks and stay dedicated to their Purpose and Passion is open for further research. However, one crucial conclusion from this research is that value and faith provide a sturdy foundation and instil confidence in one's ability to stand again. This is relevant for the scientists to entrepreneurs, who revert to their beliefs and faith to stay on the road they have envisioned for themselves when confronted with challenges in new ventures or experiments else, you wouldn't be reading this study under the light ; the incandescent bulb came after hundreds of failed experiments by scientists like William Sawyer, Albon Man, Joseph Swan, Thomas Edison (Department of Energy, 2013).

In all of the interviews, it was also highlighted that in setbacks the support system, along with strong individual's values and faith provide internal support for human willpower, optimism, and positivity in the process of rebuilding and repurposing -where one re-energizes mentally, physically, and spiritually, and in the absence of the same, one shatters and breaks-down.

Clearing the Cobwebs – Education vs. Exposure

Traditionally, education has been regarded as the sole prerequisite for unlocking a person's hidden ability and potential. The concept of individual growth as a single entity or as a part of society is widely debated across sectors such as economics, sociology, and others, with education always taking centre stage.

Governments and policymakers invest vast sums of money in creating world-class degree-oriented educational institutions and training human resources to enhance education indices. However, the reality on the ground remains unchanged. The existing educational system keeps human potential untapped and undiscovered, and in most cases, diminishes human potential instead of unlocking it.

In today's world, success is defined by the number of years spent in school and universities, as well as the number of degrees and certifications secured. But it is the unseen aspects, the 'Real Intangibles', that truly assist an individual in understanding the inner-self and the potential he possesses – i.e., Exposure (Education with Experience). Rabindra Nath Tagore would not have become a Nobel Laureate if education was the only determinant for success & Peter Higgs, theoretical physicist and Nobel Laureate, accepted that by today's standard of education he wouldn't have qualified, as he did not have enough publications to be even hired, and he is credited for the discovery of the particle named after him (Gupta, 2020, pp. 23, 180). So, exposure completes the circle if education is the starting point.

When asked which factor aided them the most in their success, practically all super achievers said the exposure was more beneficial than education. And, if education and exposure were to be ranked, education would surely come in last. Even those who have made a career in the field of education firmly believe that exposure is more important than education. They wouldn't be where they are now if they hadn't been exposed to a variety of experiences. One achiever

stated, *“Without exposure, you wouldn’t know what all can be possible. I’ve travelled to every local station in Mumbai, got down in the evening, and walked for 2 hours just to learn what people do, how they live, and how business is conducted. Knowledge is nothing but knowing people, problems, and possibilities.”* A teacher for over four decades confessed that what matters finally in life is exposure above education. All successful people have in common that they have had diverse experiences throughout their formative years.



The existing educational system keeps human potential untapped and undiscovered, and in most cases, diminishes human potential instead of unlocking it.

Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta

Exposure is moving out of one’s comfort zone to discover new places, people, thoughts, and ideas and, in the process experiencing setbacks. Sustaining in an uncomfortable situation, learning from mistakes/failures, or mastering a new skill in the process are all examples of exposure. A super-achiever who is a global technology inventor, longest-serving advisor to a Prime Minister, told us ‘I want my span of activities not in vertical slice but in horizontal network’ as it gave him the widest possible exposure.



***Exposure completes the circle if education
is the starting point.***

Dr. Manpreet kaur

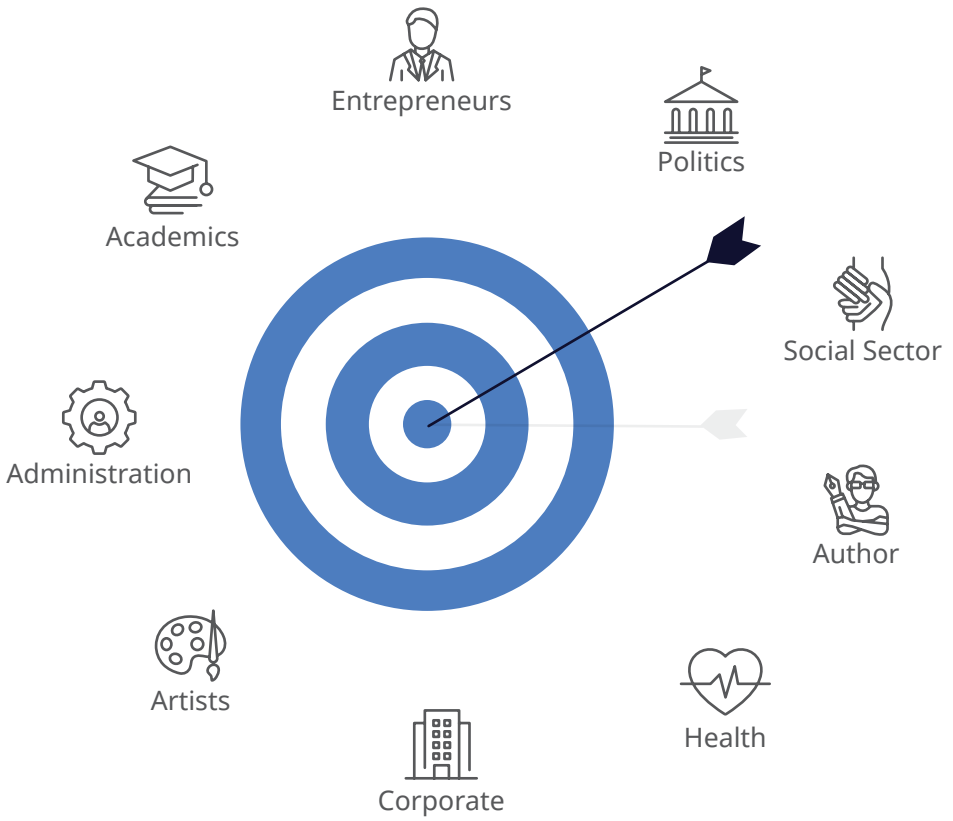
Exposure allows for the discovery and exploration of various ideas and approaches. When people experiment and explore, they learn more about themselves, develop clarity, and obtain new and unique insights into their abilities and potential. Exposure also promotes the growth of creativity and self-esteem. Exposure lessons can also help you overcome challenges and obstacles later in life. Education may open the doors for you, but beyond, it's the exposure that matters more in life.

Human Potential - A New Paradigm

- The most precious resource on the globe is not human but the potential of every human being.
- Every human has a unique potential – Capacity, and to unlock the same, we need to redefine our understanding and approach.
- You can achieve as much as you can think of or imagine.
- Having a goal or purpose is the starting point.
- A setback, or an insult or an incisive question or a comment can trigger a goal- It is a moment of truth and a call to action.
- Those who have self confidence (faith in one’s abilities) and Value system will find it easy to handle failures and setbacks and bounce back more determined.
- Clarity, Purpose and Passion, along with hard work and tenacity build on the edifice of faith and values – success unfolds and reveals itself to the world, for the world.
- Support system - Friends and family come in as a great help.
- Role of mentors & role models is important.
- Super achievers are perpetual optimists and non-conformists.
- Trade-offs are normal part of the journey.
- Exposure is more important than education.
- Finally, the role of ‘Real Intangibles’ and intrinsic factors is more important than ‘Pseudo Intangibles’.

Respondent's Profile - Fields

- US Presidential Candidate
- Grammy Award Composer
- Times - 100 Young Global Leaders
- Leading Women Diplomat – G-20
- Leader from a Multi-lateral Organization (UN body)
- Inventor and Technocrat - Former Advisor to the Prime Minister
- Leading Angel Investor
- Leading Tech Entrepreneurs
- Leading Healthcare Entrepreneurs
- Leading Education Entrepreneur
- CEO of a Global Stock Exchange
- CEO of leading Organic Products Company
- CEO of a leading Gadget Company
- Leading Educationist
- Nuclear Fusion Scientist
- Bureaucrats & Law Maker
- Cancer Survivor who has served over a million lives
- Deputy Mayor of London
- STEM Professional
- Professional Host rated amongst the top in the country
- Paediatric Neuro-psychologist in the US - Amongst the 30 prominent people in the USA
- Best-selling author
- Student





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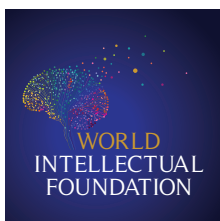
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About WIF



The World Intellectual Foundation (WIF) – is a global not-for-profit and a non-partisan think tank headquartered in Delhi and works on diverse topics and themes to promote global Peace, Prosperity, and Sustainability.

The objective of the Foundation is to encourage and assist individuals, organizations, and governments in implementing research-driven ideas that are bold, innovative, and pragmatic. Our approach is to catalyze the policy initiatives with dynamic and holistic recommendations that are implementable.

The Foundation is led by Prof. Rajendra Pratap Gupta, a public policy expert who has been contributing to policy making for over a decade.



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Date of Publication:
20th November 2021