

●pen

Open

OPEN by Ideosphere

© 2018 by Ideosphere Consulting Pvt. Ltd. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any written, electronic, recording, or photocopying form without written permission of the author and/or the publisher, Ideosphere.

Published by: Ideosphere Consulting Pvt. Ltd., Pune

Interior Design by: Kaushik Atul Bhagwat, Blu Digital, Pune

Cover Design by: Kaushik Atul Bhagwat, Blu Digital, Pune

Editing by: Kaushik Atul Bhagwat, Blu Digital, Pune

First Edition

Printed in India

Table of Contents

PREAMBLE	4
FOREWORD	6
PART I - ENGAGEMENT	
The One Night Stand that Never Ended	07
The Man in the Mirror	10
The Perfect Orgasm	14
How Relationships Can Build a Community	18
Elements of Compatibility	22
Friends Close, Enemies Closer	25
PART II - MARRIAGE	
Sometimes Separation is not a Bad Thing	29
Inspiring Trust	32
The Line of Saving and Investment	36
Breaking the Monotony	39
Bro, I've Got Your Back	44
PART III - DIVORCE	
When Connectivity Disconnects	48
Rekindling the Love	52
When We Becomes Me	56
EDITOR'S NOTE	59

PREAMBLE

A great person once very aptly said: “The Greatest Relationships are the ones you never expected to be in”.

It was a very sunny summer morning in Pune when Aniruddha called me and said that he was up with working for someone and really wanted to do something on his own. Back home Minal was saying the same. So, it was decided. We met the next day for a cup of coffee to see what could be done about it. Neither Minal nor Aniruddha knew each other, had never even met once and they were going to figure if they should set up a business together!!! A perfect recipe for disaster as most would say. Nonetheless, we did meet and they did decide to start a business in communications together. All they knew was that it could not be a standard PR Agency, it had to be different. The narrative had to be unique and compelling.

So here are two complete strangers deciding on setting up a business that according to them would change the rules of the game and would in many ways do what St. Luke’s did to the advertising world. This new baby of theirs was called Ideosphere as it was collectively decided that it would be an agency that would offer solutions to Clients and not merely PR campaigns. It would be a boutique consultancy that would be crafted as an Ideas cauldron. The foundation and structure thus had to be such that it was conducive for its employees to ideate freely. No idea would be big or small, good or bad.

Incredulously brave for the two to think of such a story, such a narrative. Who would have thought that they would ever succeed? But then today seven years down the line, here I am writing the Preamble for this book by Ideosphere. How did they do it? Hard work, dedication, luck apart, the real truth behind their success lies in the way they have managed to string together a whole host of relationship both internal and external. Relationships that like their ideas came in all shapes and hues. Relationships where people came in as perfect strangers and then morphed into the Ideosphere Family.

A couple of weeks ago when the founders were sitting down and discussing this, we suddenly realized how amazing all these relationships were, yet how we often tend to ignore them. It was thus decided that a book is put together that captured this unique web of relationships in the words of their various stakeholders to narrate this beautiful story called Ideosphere.

I'm sure you would get a far better understanding of Ideosphere and its DNA through the various narratives of relationships laid out through the thoughtful chapterization of this book. More importantly, I can assure you that it will be an interesting and happy read.

Enjoy Relationships!

Nikhil D'Rozario

Chairman,
NDRConsult

FOREWORD

It was heartening to know that the team at Ideosphere is compiling a book written by individuals who work at the firm. I was fortunate to go through the manuscript and read the collection of thoughts nicely woven together. I'm grateful to the leadership for thinking of me to these honours though I strongly feel they could have found someone better than me.

The three sections are smartly brought together. To the best of my knowledge, I have not come across another venture on similar lines where multiple professionals have co-authored heartfelt opinions on what goes on generally in the professional world and specifically in a communication enterprise. I was not sure if I would do justice in writing this foreword, but I will try to convince you; the reader to spend some of your time reading through.

Public Relations is about content that is shared with connections. Communication plays a pivotal role in this endeavour. We often mistake Public Relations for communications. And we forget that all Public Relations is in order to increase goodwill, enhance reputation, offer engagement, create affinity and build trust. Through this book, one sees all these manifestations coming out distinctly from a human interest point of view.

OPEN is a great initiative. I hope other firms try and do the same and wish Ideosphere brings out a publication like this annually. We need more content that becomes the guiding light for current and future professionals. I enjoyed reading some chapters more than the others. Every chapter brings the essence of relationships which is at the core of Public Relations and offers lessons in skills we often take for granted.

In an age of 280 characters, I put a restriction of 300 words and want to stick to that. All the best Team Ideosphere and happy reading to you for getting started.

Amith Prabhu,

A Friend of Ideosphere

THE ONE NIGHT STAND THAT NEVER ENDED

The passion, excitement, and pleasure of one-night stands only fall short to the satisfaction of building a meaningful relationship. In the millennial age where everything is based on short and quick returns, having a meaningful relationship filled with passion, excitement and pleasure seem like an upheaval task.

But you can by treating every day like a one-night stand. We have heard the analogy live by the day, but in relationships, it's a one-night stand. Fight like kids, blow up at each other, and call each other names that surprise yourself after they come out of your mouth, but have the security that the person will take you back every time. They take you back because they can feel your passion towards a common goal, and this allows them to look past minor, forgettable incidents. Circumstances bring people together, but passion keeps them that way. If you lose the passion, kiss the relationship goodbye as well.

We both walked into it, not knowing what was going to happen. We knew the door was open for either of us to walk out of, but we knew the other person would never walk out. There was a unified vision, energy and certain innocence to the relationship we were building. We called the relationship Ideosphere and approached our work in the same way. We agreed to a one night stand. But, it never ended.


You can only guarantee performance to a certain degree, but we quickly learned that we could surely guarantee energy and aggression. We put passion at the foundation of the company, and literally, winged everything else. We had never started a business before and had hardly been in meaningful leadership positions, let alone leading a company. Being a one-night stand approach, we had no commitments except an expectation of the energy we bring every day.

In the same way, we met and started Ideosphere the next day, we did things on intuition letting faith in our ideals guide the way. Client relationships work in a similar way. The first meeting of a new client is exciting, passionate and brings an innocent energy, but the trick is to sustain the feeling. New ideas need to be tabled regularly and the relationship needs to be reinvented every now and then. Disagreements and failure are fine, and the relationship can still survive. But if you lose the fire, you lose the client. The equation is simple, but just as hard to implement.


Treat every meeting with a client as a one-night stand; without knowing if it will ever happen again. By not taking the relationship for granted, we end up pushing ourselves to impress the client and showcase value every time. The relationship with the client may go on for years, but every meeting is fascinating and brings in the renewed energy filled with ideas, radical thoughts attracting the client and agency to each other again and again with every meeting.

The feeling is hard to explain, but then again so is every elevated emotion. You know when you know, and when you know, you can be sure you both know it. Nothing needs to be said. You both know last night was awesome, and as you say goodbye, you have the faith that you will be seeing each other again. And it will be awesome again.

The relationship we call Ideosphere never was supposed to survive. Lack of experience, first-time entrepreneurs, bootstrapped, and an environment of the unknown. Every sign pointed to failure, but as they say, when all else fails, love will save the day.



Treat every meeting with a client as a one-night stand; without knowing if it will ever happen again.



Every sign pointed to failure, but as they say, when all else fails, love will save the day.

THE MAN IN THE MIRROR

Every morning, a man wakes up, looks in the mirror, and gets 'practical'. We often come across a story where a livelihood is achieved as though bestowed upon like a crown. To achieve a livelihood, one must aspire with ambition and execute with practicality to achieve success. Because a livelihood is a man's badge of honour, typically it should be hard-earned, irrespective of the methodology. The man could have woken up, looked in the mirror, eaten his breakfast, walked his dog, and then gotten practical. But how he does it and in what order, is his signature mark.

Getting a job with Ideosphere immediately after college ended was a head-start. A situation most often pursued by A-graders and early birdwatchers alike. However, being an individual of the opposite character, it was noteworthy to understand how advantageous for fresh undergraduates catching the early worm could be. Work, in the beginning, turned out to be pretty amazing and especially exciting since I worked under college seniors. Though as time progressed, it occurred to me that it was not simply a 'job' that I had signed-up for. It certainly couldn't be termed as part-time either. This so-called 'job' was a set of responsibilities that I candidly took up in order to follow the cycle - wake up, look in the mirror and get practical. So it was important to understand the face value of your contribution as well as backstage of how you're planning it all out.

I gladly took up the responsibilities as would a third wheel do - be within the amiable vicinity of your company and field the calls for opinions, values, and decisions. Some say a third wheel is an object of redundancy. Others may call it a mediator among sorts. But the best judge of relationships and social stigmas are the ones watching the real deal taking place out in the harsh world. It taught me things


and showed me how to be practical. I am, thus, grateful for fielding the gains, failures, and remarks. The man in the mirror now has a few chin scars.

Typically, a marriage fails if the two individuals have separate agendas in their lives. On the other hand, having a shared vision guarantees progress. The reciprocal perspective on life, in general, keeps things moving on one desirable trajectory. So without a singular and uniform sail, the ship cannot move further. As long as teamwork is in place, the sail should remain facing one direction and this is where leadership matters. One should know where they are getting inspiration to fuel their ambitions. We pick up a few expletives here and there, and likewise, a few characteristics from here and there. For that matter, the bossman sticking his boot up my rear is the exact same person I would turn into in the future. The question which should be asked is - Are we taking measurable steps to ensure we are not completely a sack of potatoes in the business? So making regular visits to our mirror can help us balance this transformation. We decide what qualities to retain, and what pre-existing discrepancies to weed out. This cosmetic translation is what shapes us for the better. And on behalf of mankind, I hope we continue to accept it. As understanding one-self first starts with accepting your own character.


Leadership can also make a bad employee by accident. When a leader looks in the mirror, the image on the mirror is what the followers are going to get. Not only are good morals passed on, but so are the vices and immoralities. It is a great responsibility for leaders to coach others. In my tenure so far, many associated individuals stand idolized in my eyes for the values they share. A person at work once greatly impressed me with the virtue of getting things done in the fastest turnaround. That co-worker happens to be the same person to brainlessly advise smoking in the company yearbook of 2017 as a stress stimulant. It takes common sense and a great eye for detail to identify the rights from wrongs. And nowhere does it say in the song that Humpty Dumpty was an egg. Though don't take my word for it, you could still make a mistake. So hope you're looking into the mirror every once in a while.

In many instances, in the middle of a thought, I would pause to rethink my 'life strategy' and observe peers. Many will admit that it gives a sense of level-headedness in exchanging notes with immediate peers. However, a devil's workshop tends to compare lives and this incubates an unhealthy anxiety. We are often clouded by thoughts of how it's not fair to make the successful decisions that people around us are making.

One must accept their nature in acknowledging their own strengths and weaknesses. Otherwise, they would be cheating themselves. This reinstates one's duty to be responsible for their own triumphs and defeats. But when we look in a mirror, we are taking everyone in perspective too. The most important question to answer is - are you accepting yourself for who you are? A man looks in the mirror, complains of the traffic. Turns out, he is the traffic.



**A man looks in the mirror,
complains of the traffic.
Turns out, he is the traffic.**



**Typically, a marriage fails if the
two individuals have separate
agendas in their lives.**

THE PERFECT ORGASM

A good start means half your work is done already. This works as a method across all the relationships that we build in our lives. It may be that pretty girl with who you're trying to strike a conversation, or it can even be an interview where you want to charm your future employer in the very first go. If you listen well, you understand the other person better. And the better you understand this other person, whoever it may be, the lesser the chances are of this relationship getting strained. This gets us to our first step of creating a successful and long-lasting relationship. You have to take time to uncover their real "hot buttons" and things that keep them awake at night. Of course, understanding all needs and apparent wants don't quite happen in the first conversation but remember, this first conversation is the stepping stone of many, many more to follow, and with time, patience and the willingness to get to know the other person, you slowly move ahead.

If you think a relationship is coming to its standstill, adding some magic to rekindle the love is always a good idea. Embarking on an adventure and spontaneity works like a charm! It works wonderfully even when we are talking about a client-agency relationship. Hitting a roadblock when we're working in a dynamic environment, is a given. Following the same processes, day after day is bound to become monotonous. The challenge is to overcome this dull phase together and yet have some fun while moving past it. It takes a tremendous amount of deep-diving into a client's scope of work to churn out the expected results because working on a superficial level does not help at all. And believe me, this is the time when you will need to refurbish the relationship with a client; this will be of utmost necessity in order to break free from the monotony of the process. Try out more ways of spicing it up - shuffle things around a bit, experiment with your

positions and create a whole new concoction! This will definitely get you in a place where the magic was never lost, and where your connection will be the strongest. This is the phase where you confess your fears to each other and surpass it together. Only if you talk about things will you realize if you are on the same page, or if you are in 2 different libraries altogether. The biggest brownie point that you will ever get is by listening and acting accordingly. That counts the most.


Planning can be a mellow process, and more importantly an overwhelming one, probably the most overwhelming. This is the time when you focus on the bigger picture and on the greater purpose that we plan on accomplishing as a team. A successful campaign is one where you have complete clarity of what the objective is and what is the kind of outcome that you are looking to achieve.

I remember a campaign that I had an opportunity to work on - a legacy cardiac care hospital brand. Our challenge was to reposition, rebrand and communicate the institution keeping in mind the strong ethos and legacy it holds in the healthcare domain. We began our work with listing down the brand attributes that we wanted to communicate, with doing complete justice to the brand essence. Our goal was to celebrate their golden jubilee on their foundation day by making their patients, trustees, and well-wishers an integral part of the gathering. We began channelling all our efforts towards working on initiatives and created strategies to bring credibility and depth to the brand. We created a holistic method that touched upon every aspect.


We had some sleepless nights over getting things done, but boy was it worth it! Witnessing every aspect manifest in the way you had imagined is a feeling that is inexpressible! In the beginning, the process may seem tiring, things may look impossible to achieve, but always, always, always focus on your end goal. The adrenaline rush is absolutely unimaginable, making you stronger and ready to design the next campaign.

Moving forward, it's safe to say that no relationship is like the ones they show in the movies and the types that mushy romantic novels are filled with. Reality is a little bit different, but it's definitely more interesting.

Not always will your client approve your first campaign idea or even shell money out of his pocket. But you've got to hang in there. There might be clashes or long periods of silence, but you've still got to hang in there. Hang in there, and you just might, experience the perfect professional orgasm.



**The challenge is to overcome
this dull phase together and
yet have some fun while
moving past it.**



**Planning can be a mellow
process, and more importantly
an overwhelming one, probably
the most overwhelming.**

HOW RELATIONSHIPS CAN BUILD A COMMUNITY

Humans have always been social animals. By nature, we try to find out commonalities among each other. Hence, community building has been an essential part of our social life since the very beginning of time. A community is a group of people with shared interest and characteristics living together within a larger society.

Relationships, in a communal setting, are the building blocks that binds the different members of the community together. Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community. And a sense of caring evolves based on the relationships we have with our peers in the community.

As kids, we all have played with building blocks. I remember it very discreetly because whenever I used to create a tower out of my building blocks it used to come down shattering. My mother always advised me to place the blocks right on top of each other so that it would never shatter. Today, we have a similar relationship building strategy with everyone around us. While observing the people around me, I always wonder; is creating a strong relationship so important. The answer I receive is somewhere hidden in the advice given by my mother on the building blocks.

To form a lasting relationship one needs to be very careful in choosing their steps else the relationship can come tumbling down and you won't be able to mend it in the same way. This takes me back to the days when I started working. It was a normal summer day at school, though I was pretty excited cause I knew the results for the writing competition were about to be disclosed. The excitement level went higher when I got to know that whoever wins the competition will get the opportunity to work with Times of India. My inner writer started contemplating pros and cons of this eminent opportunity. As

the teacher announced my name, all the contemplation went down the drain, and the only thought that enveloped my mind was starting with a golden phase in my life. We experience great things in life that make us what we are today but often forget where the journey began.

Ideosphere gave me the horizon to breathe with open wings and fly to whichever length I want to. The team taught me to give what you think you would want in return. The teaching is not yet over and we have a long way to cover whether the ride is bumpy or smooth.

Life is not as complicated as we make it! Let me walk you through a fact, life is even more complicated than we think it is.

Blood Ties

Relationships in a social world work on various level. The first community we build using our relationships is our immediate family. This is where blood ties are paramount, and relationships are strong. Growing up in a large joint family, I could cherish the sense of togetherness, mutual adjustment, and commitment to each other. This is where my relationship with the different family members helped me learn the value of being supportive of each other, setting aside individual wants for the betterment of the larger family and selflessness.

Love Thy Neighbour

The next level where relationships play an important role in community building is the neighbourhood we live in – popularly known as ‘paras’ in Bengali. Now that I live away from my family in a different city with fast-paced lifestyles and an ‘individualistic’ culture, there is a need to cherish relationships between neighbours and the larger community we are living in. Where I grew up, the neighbourhood was more like an extended family, relationships are tight-knit and people really would care for each other. While too much care from neighbours might be a bit overwhelming at times, a close-knit community does have its advantages as well. The whole community is there to support you during times of need and you support back when some else needs it. In a typical Bengali neighbourhood, there would be a small ‘club’ or a ‘community hall’ (nothing fancy) in the neighbourhood which would be our choice for recreation when not


being used to address various issues and matters. Relationships provide a perspective to the community. Rather than a just group of people, it becomes a balanced cohort with a pragmatic approach towards addressing problems.

The Professional Space and Relationships


Many of the learnings from relationships and community building can be juxtaposed in the professional environment we work in. In this case, our immediate colleagues become the family, I have mentioned about previously. Community relations are key components to the success of any organization. Since we work closely with each other, we develop strong professional relationships with each other. We know our strengths and weaknesses, the problems we face and the goals of the organization. In an ideal scenario, we should be able to respect the individualism of each employee and the fact that we are working together towards the betterment of the company as a whole. The management of the organization, on the other hand, should appreciate different views, accept criticism, and value employees through regular communication and create direct relationships. This creates a harmonious environment for employees to keep themselves motivated and excel in what they do.

Community Engagement

Just like engaging employees is vital to a production company, engaging the local community is crucial to strengthening relationships with the people in the area and improving the employment brand. I remember how Nestle used to hold impromptu workshops/huddles in our neighbourhood to try their products. This is something we kids used to be excited about and Nestle became a household name as well. I also remember the community sporting events and blood donation camps that we used to organize. These events warranted participation from local brands as sponsors and I remember how we used to scout for sponsorships. More often than not, it was personal relationships with local brands that would help us get sponsors. We were quick to realize that the investment in creating healthy relationships pays off in time.



**Without a sense of caring,
there can be no sense of
community.**



**Many of the learnings from
relationships and community
building can be juxtaposed in
the professional environment
we work in.**

ELEMENTS OF COMPATIBILITY

“How do you even know if he/she is the right one?” There is a moment in every person lives of dilemma and choices. As far as I know of, the response is always - ‘You just know, or it just clicks’. While they are very simple words, the depth of this statement almost takes a lifetime to understand.

Yes, we are talking about compatibility. In any form of a relationship in my view, it involves two points for relationships to prosper or as they say compatible. No Judgments and No Expectations. Its easier said than done as both are just impossible terms to deal with for any individual. Being in the business of communication I come across various kind of people some are rigid, some kind and agile, some aggressive and focused and some just so awesome that you know the first time you meet them “We were meant to be”.


The chemistry is so crazy, as they get you without uttering words and for a woman that would be an ideal world. This is the first leg of compatibility, as we start on this intuition and gut feeling inside our stomach driving towards the question. As the relationship starts to move on with time the real litmus test begins of expectations and judgments. Every step begins to be questioned with circumstances and situations of When, Where, Why and How bringing a lot more layers of complexities to something which had started off so beautifully.

Compatibility is like a piece of art as its interpretations are manifested by individual personalities. It does not necessarily mean a vibrant one all the time. At times it's monotonous and still so perfect. A buyer of a painting does not come to the gallery with judgments and expectations with the exact painting he will buy, he just comes to explore something new and be able to connect each time. Similarly,

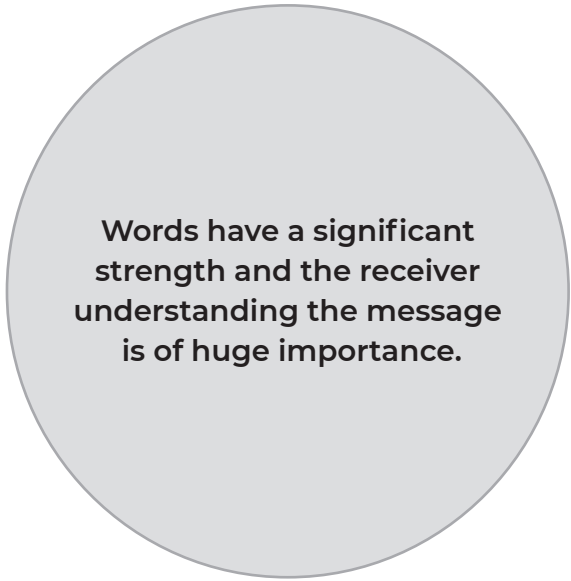
the relationships which we hope to be perfect need a correction as the more we don't judge people for what they are and don't expect from them the understanding, the more we are making ourselves a lot more compatible to a lot more people.

The experience over time had tuned me to expect and judge which was then replaced by the word experience. And believe you me, we all go through this, but it took a lot of effort for me to unlearn this aspect in myself. With constant reminders and ignoring its been an unbelievable journey so far. Compatibility is not with another person it's with yourself.

Today, I am a lot more content with my work and people as they are based on genuine relationships. While I say this for individuals, I also state this for businesses. So it does not matter the form of relationships or entities the compatible state of mind should start with you. Words have a significant strength and the receiver understanding the message is of huge importance.



Compatibility is like a piece of art as its interpretations are manifested by individual personalities.



Words have a significant strength and the receiver understanding the message is of huge importance.

FRIENDS CLOSE, ENEMIES CLOSER

When working with a team of a diverse set of people, you are likely to get along with some and maybe not with some others.

Whether in big sized teams at the bottom of the hierarchy or smaller sized teams as we go up the hierarchy at all levels of management - one finds some 'friends' who are a support in the workplace and some unwanted 'enemies' who slow us down or compete against us. There can be a number of people we can fit in the 'enemies' box - some who compete against you, some who pinpoint faults in your work, or maybe some who just slander or bad-mouth you without any reason.

I have encountered many enemies through the years – some have been during my high school days and some at work. I remember an incident during my summer internship at a reputed firm years ago. One of my friends (from the same college) who was interning with me but under a different department, leaked some of my personal information to my team leads. At first, I didn't understand the need for her to do that especially when a) we were good friends and b) both of us were under different verticals so there was no scope of competition at any level. It took me a while to understand why she did what she did. Fortunately, one of my team lead had been through a similar situation before. It was her support and the knowledge that she imparted on to me through her own learnings that helped me in dealing with that situation like a pro.

I happily forgave my frenemy because regardless of our fall out, she gave me some amazing memories and a life learning for keeps. But what was the life learning?

Now, when the very purpose of a team (as the full form says Together Everyone Achieves More) is to work coherently & harmoniously as a

unit, towards achieving both individual & team level goals, then how does one deal with one's enemies in a team?

Hmm, how about keeping our friends close, but our enemies even closer - Well, did I just say that - Yes.

If we just try and shift our perception of what we are calling an enemy, we may discover something more:

1) Competition as a healthy fuel - Your opponents, may actually bring up genuine perspectives/ideas to challenge yours, indirectly making your thinking more inclusive & better with time. They may end up finding real flaws in what you might have overlooked and considered flawless. Different mindsets bring out different approaches to solve the same problem (goal) that a team may seek. Competition need not be egoistic as everyone is an expert in something and a dodo in something else. Why not get inspired by something we perceive as better, and try to improve our thoughts, ideas & processes. And it is this continual inter-learning that makes the world go round and round.

2) Competition as a form of collaboration - Despite being arch rivals, Apple outsourced the production of it's OLED screen component of its flagship iPhone X to Samsung. In fact, a collaboration between competitors is in fashion - General Motors and Toyota assemble automobiles, Siemens and Philips develop semiconductors, Canon supplies photocopiers to Kodak, and the list goes on. But the spread of what we call "competitive collaboration".

3) For the 'frenemies' that bad mouth you or slander you without any apparent reason, why not just shrug it off. Wisdom is seeing what is not shown & listening to what is not said.


As Oprah says, 'If they knew better, they'd do better'. Just a perspective - let's look at them from the time they were born as babies... They probably weren't born irrational - it's how their life experiences shaped them up, ending up with such apparently irrational behaviour. Going one step further & being kind to them (just the way I did by forgiving my frenemy), we may end up being one pleasant vibrant experience that they experience.

Teamwork- A quality imbibed in me from a very young age and today is one of my strengths. Having been a hockey player, I understand the importance and advantage a group of people sticking around with a common agenda can have and the huge impact it can create. I believe unity can break or make the most favourable or unfavourable condition for a team.

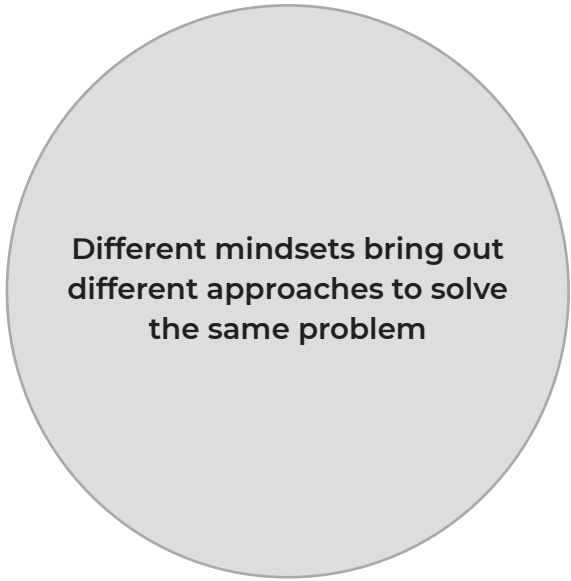
It is human to replicate something that you have been seeing or been on the receiving end of. It is easier to learn things you shouldn't be doing as a leader when you are time and again unfortunate to have a not-so-nice boss. Every time I ran out of luck, I made mental notes what I don't want to do as I go up the ladder.

When I did go up the hierarchy to lead the Mumbai operations for Ideosphere, things weren't as hunky dory as I assumed they would be. I hit my first hurdle quite earlier than expected. And, my hurdle was called Acceptance- Being accepted as a leader. But after hopping onto the boat, a boat that was as good as a raft plank with four of us trying to balance on each corner-four different people with different backgrounds and experiences, different psyches and needless to say each one crazier than the other. I wouldn't really get the settling period and realized a region like Mumbai that has tremendous potential for an agency but an equal amount of deterring competition. With Pune, Bangalore having a galloping team and performance, the first step was to stabilize the branch by building a team and then join the race. The leader has to ensure that the competitive attitude is healthy and only bears positive spirit.

This is where I further learned that not all five fingers are similar and not necessary all people think, function and react in the same way. Thankfully this has helped me build a cohesive, reliable team that stays like a family and is very supportive towards each other and strives to win together.



If we just try and shift our perception of what we are calling an enemy, we may discover something more.



Different mindsets bring out different approaches to solve the same problem

SOMETIMES SEPARATION IS NOT A BAD THING

The famous Lebanese poet, Kahlil Gibran, opined, 'Ever has it been that love knows not its own depth until the hour of separation'. Many of the learnings we realize from our relationships can be easily attributed, not only to our own personal lives but our professional lives as well. Separation is not permanent, and in many cases, it actually helps strengthen the relationship. In fact, counter-intuitively, separation can actually prevent relationships, whether personal or business, to head towards divorce. Divorce is finality; separation is not.


Every relationship takes an effort to maintain, grow and renew itself with every phase. Sometimes, we forget this, and during these times, the easiest road seems to be to end the relationship. 'There is no fire left anymore' is a common answer to why relationships cease to exist, personally and professionally. The fire is not an entitlement, but something that needs to be kept alive with continuous determination. Separation can help us to reassess the fire that we believe to have been put out, and discover newer ways to reignite the same energy. Many times, post a professional break, the ideas, thoughts, and discussion starts to have the same fire that they used to. Maybe it is true: we don't realize the value of something until we lose it. In which case, lose it and realize its value!

Relationships are all about managing expectations, and sometimes, we just get tired of living up to these expectations. This is the start of a relationship break down. The struggle gets to be so difficult that many times it is hard to point out the breaking point of any relationship. It is easy to say that relationships should have no expectations, but without expectations, is it really even a relationship?

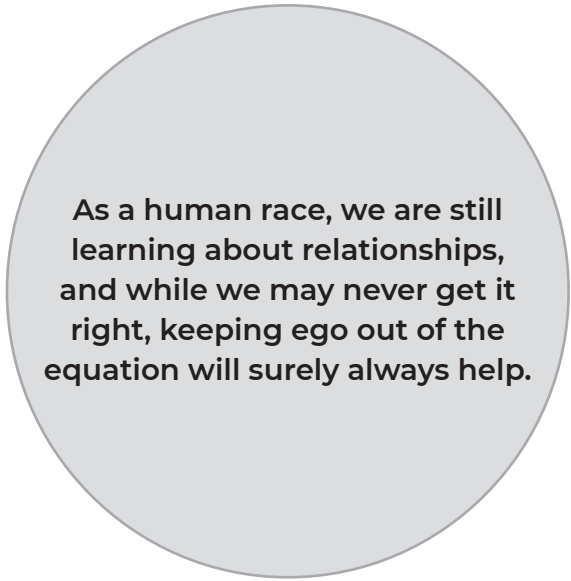
A separation helps to redefine expectations and understand the value that the relationship brought to your life, team or business. The

feeling of these missing aspects as soon as a relationship starts to go haywire is the reason you start to fall in love again. You fall in love with everything once again.; not only the good aspects but the drawbacks as well. You may try and look for a replacement. But it is just that: a replacement. And nothing can replace what the relationship brought to the table. Many times, we let our ego get in the way of what is good for us. This is particularly true more in business than personally. What started out a journey to work together to make something beautiful has been stopped by something as silly as ego. What a sad reason to end something that could have magical!

But great relationships never die. It is a timeless learning of all relationships since the start of time. Kahlil Gibran knew it the 1900s, and in the 2000s, John Mayer still sings 'it always comes around, back to you'. As a human race, we are still learning about relationships, and while we may never get it right, keeping ego out of the equation will surely always help. This is not to say that some relationships are bound to and should cease as they are not healthy for the people involved, but most relationships stop working because the people involved stop working towards making it work. In these cases, a little separation is good. It just may help you to come back together and create a something more magnificent than you had earlier planned; well as long as you check your ego at the door...



**Divorce is finality;
separation is not.**



**As a human race, we are still
learning about relationships,
and while we may never get it
right, keeping ego out of the
equation will surely always help.**

INSPIRING TRUST

“Once we get into combat, they only people you can trust is yourself and the fella next to you”

-Band of Brothers (2001)

A not so famous quote from a critically acclaimed TV mini-series, where Corporal Bill Gurnere is talking to Staff Sergeant Joe Toye about trust and why it is so important to trust your buddy and team during a situation like war. War, where the life of one soldier is in the hands of another. Well, today's corporate world is no less than a war, let alone the universe called corporate, when you are in public relations then definitely your work, your reputation internal and external is dependent upon your team and that's the point where you have to stand up and realize the importance of trust. Trust is important but to know and understand how to build and inspire trust among your team as well as your client is imperative.

Building trust is not something that can be done instantly. It takes immense effort and time moreover your own conduct and attitude towards your team and client play an important role. To begin with let's talk about building and inspiring trust among your clients. First and foremost, the question is what does a client want? Over the past 6 years, I have seen something that is really consistent with almost every client I have worked with, almost all of them love clarity and commitment. When a client comes to you with a communication mandate he is coming to you with a hope that the team which is going to handle the mandate is going to do the justice with the image of his company. So, converting that hope into trust is the first step any team needs to do while handling a new mandate but how it is done? It is done by following processes and keeping small things in mind. When processes are followed, and small things are not missed out clarity

is maintained, it's a by-product of following client service processes. When clarity is maintained with the client you are automatically able to set expectations right and do what you have committed basis your expectations.

Trust is the key to every relationship. Be it personal or professional, your relationship can never mature if it lacks trust.

It was very recent that I got an opportunity to work within my industry domain, but from the other side of the table. Concept Public Relations appointed me as a full-time representative to work from client's office.


Excitement, nervousness, anxiousness and a lot more surrounded the beginning of a new phase. The experience was very similar to that of a newly married girl, who is new to her in-law's family, their lifestyle and culture. A place where she is been looked as an outsider, keeping her away from family decisions and privacy.

Job responsibility took the centre stage, having each leg on either side of two organizations. A juggle between dual roles kept me growing as well as my learning experience. Soon, the relationships were built, good work reflected and trust only grew. The journey, which only started as a primary role grew as team bonding, ownership, confidence, and reliability.


Unfortunately, this professional relationship was meant to come to an end. However, as rightly said, after every evening there comes a morning. The next professional chapter commenced with Ideosphere. Interestingly, this story has its own old connections; a professional stint with Aniruddha.

It is not always easy to walk the talk. Many try to do that but fail miserably because they miss out on something we call trust. This entire circle of trust between client->team leader->team makes the wheel spin. Any organization who wants to walk the talk in terms of claiming to achieve higher goals can do so if they have mutual trust from all the three stakeholders involved in the game. The worth of any person is not proved just basis the knowledge or facts that person has but also how much the team trusts that person. Therefore, to

gain trust across the board right kind of action with right kind of attitude matters most words are just a medium. There is a limitation to what words can do as compared to what actions can do to inspire and build trust.



**Be it personal or professional,
your relationship can never
mature if it lacks trust.**



**There is a limitation to what
words can do as compared
to what actions can do to
inspire and build trust.**

THE LINE OF SAVING AND INVESTMENT

As I grew up, the topic of savings and investment were based on relationships and hardly on matters of money. We planned survival, liabilities, and support for future with the core purpose of having a peaceful and quality life. We as entrepreneurs discuss the subject of savings and investment if not every day in the back of our mind, but every year at the AGM. The lines blur as time passes and savings and investment become just one consolidated thought.

There was a time in our journey where we were almost zero in bank balance and were waiting for some sort of a sign to get the bank balance back to flourishing times. Unfortunately, the sign was not in the new business acquisition but within us in our approach. Segregating the monetary savings and investment is simple, but when you have to segregate your product, service, people that's when it starts to make a lot more sense.


For example, when a child is born as parents we start to save for his future education and sustenance. Once the child starts working we see his contribution as an investment based on our values, systems, and culture. As he grows older he starts to save with his own perspectives of what he calls an investment which could be in form of money, lifestyle, thought process and purpose.

Similarly, for growing and expanding a network of lineage, it's important to allow the next generation to have their own statements of savings and investment. Allow them to have their version of sustaining relationships and approaching work. There is no formulae as it is cyclical, and we need to be cognizant of the same in our decisions of businesses and individuals.


We hire people and customize services and products as an investment, but the foresight of a founder in making that a saving. This handholding of both is cyclical in nature there is no formulae what would be the right time during the course of your career or business. But it's definitely worthy of outlaying your approach and the candid understanding of your fundamental and financial strength of the business.

Being the head of the family and responsible for the welfare of relationships within the eco-system, it is a responsibility to ensure everyone in the family understands the fine line between savings and investments, and moreover, enables financial literacy within the eco-system. People have always said don't bring money in between relationships, but at times, it does come in, and a consistency in thought process is essential.

At Ideosphere, we have given it all and keep identifying our own versions of savings and investments at times it has been risky, some with excellent returns and some saved us in bad times. What it did was to keep alive the agility towards the business and the people part of the eco-system.



**When you have to segregate
your product, service, people
that's when it starts to make
a lot more sense.**



**People have always said
don't bring money in between
relationships, but at times, it
does come in, and a consistency
in thought process is essential.**

BREAKING THE MONOTONY

"It's a hard thing to leave any deeply routined life, even if you hate it."

- John Steinbeck

No matter how much you may love your job, we hate it when we conclude a task and another one makes way into our list. These feelings often lead to a creation of monotonous work cycle, which limits our growth and creativity and ultimately leading to job dissatisfaction. It is time for you to skip your job search and look deeper at the real issue.

When you are ready to start your day, do you often feel irritated or lazy to go to the office? This is a huge red flag. Even when you start your day by reminding yourself about the deadlines, it is again limiting in terms of your outlook. This will eventually impact your work especially when you are trusted to elevate a client's reach or approach. By identifying the primary reasons, you will be able to create a priority list and also expand your growth.

- Write about your ideal life, this can be the kind of work you always envisioned, the growth of the client base or even your personal life. A good balance of all aspects will help you in identifying the areas to improve in or alter

- In terms of your job, what are your certain must haves? Are you looking at cracking the next promotion or appreciation from the client or even creating a long-term relationship with a client? This becomes essential in terms of aligning your professional aspirations

- Identify your strengths and start co-relating it to your colleagues, it will help you in understanding their market value and how they improved their skill set. Ultimately, allowing you to identify your own path in the company

- Think from a client perspective, always think about what if you owned that company. This will lead to a better classification in terms of what are my objectives, growth I am expecting and how to get there. The major chunk of your to-do list will be solved once you have identified and understood the business model and strategy your client had adopted. Hence, changing your outlook and helping your restricted priority list

Through these basic methods, you will be able to identify the reason behind the monotony. More often than not, we end up blaming the job for limiting our scope and whilst looking for a new place and job structure, it will be worthwhile to try adding a fun element to your existing responsibilities. By getting out of the day to day delivery mechanism, it is time to take a step back and focus on things that can make a difference to your client and work towards it.

I have always been one for routines. I have enjoyed my daily regime to a point where nothing could disrupt my well oiled, efficient and autopilot life. I surrounded myself with people who believed in the same guiding principle, until the day my parents made a simple request of me, "Come stay with us for a few weeks. We could do something fun. It has been a while" This request at that time seemed unrealistic to fulfil. I mean I had a job, friends I had to catch up with over the weekends, brunches to attend on Sundays. I had things going on, but you know what they say, you do things for the family!

With a rather disapproving mind, I took a break from work and put everything on the back burner for six weeks. No emails, no work calls, no maids and most importantly, no 6.30am wake-up alarm. The picture was not looking pretty. And it can be told now; I did come up with a few of my best excuses, in my head, to get out of it. For the first time, I felt a fear setting in, the fear of unknown. It might sound dramatic, but for someone who doesn't like change, this was a big deal!

At my parents' place I was expected to do pretty much everything you would imagine doing on a vacation – Eat, sleep, watch TV, drink, socialize, read, wander. I did every bit of it as per instructions. That's right I followed instructions because I was not too sure of what I was

supposed to be doing, so I kept asking my parents. By week two they gave up on me and asked me to go figure. Most people would call this an onset of boredom, I call it ignorance, as my brain did not know anything better. For the next few weeks, I decided to put my ignorance to rest and explore. And so I did.

Amongst the many, these are probably the three most important facets that changed for me over time.

Getting over limitations

While I have always been very organized and good at what I did, I found some of my peers having an edge over me when it came to understanding things that don't necessarily come with reference notes. They weren't the smartest, they weren't the most organized, and definitely not the most disciplined. However, what they did have was an objective mind, which allowed transfusion of any information. Whilst stuck in my autopilot mode and continuing to do what I always did, I never realized I had to take control, press the accelerator and steer the wheel a bit to stay ahead in the race.

Playing outside the comfort zone

While I have always found comfort around people who were just like me, believed in the same things as me, and brought a certain familiarity, I would find myself rather disappointed and distressed every time when we did not agree on things. Though affinity towards someone or something is a great source of comfort, it never teaches you growth and mindfulness.


Success is temporarily constant

One thing about people who always play by the rulebook, success for them is the obvious final destination, failure is not an option. This greed to win every time becomes so important that focus sometimes shifts from winning to not failing. The ability to take risks, make mistakes and thinking big becomes impossible, instead, they function under the belief that status quo is good.


As a wise man once said, 'Success is a worthy course of continual becoming' without losing enthusiasm, commitment, perseverance whilst embracing discouragement and failures. One had to be

dissatisfied enough to try something different. So sometimes it is to experiment with failure.

“If you spend your life sitting in a cubicle and passing papers,” wrote Joshua Foer in *Moonwalking with Einstein*, “one day is bound to blend unmemorably into the next-and disappear.”



**More often than not,
we end up blaming the job
for limiting our scope.**



**Most people would call this
an onset of boredom,
I call it ignorance.**

BRO, I'VE GOT YOUR BACK

As any seasoned soldier will tell you, tactics of warfare whether flying off the offensive or staring defeat in the face, dictate that you overcome a physiological disadvantage of not being able to see behind you. In countries ridden with conflict, it's worth a punt that your social fabric has brought you folklore straight from the battlefield. One particularly unforgettable tale I've heard from a retired Colonel who made a lasting impression on me through his unshakeable bravado, allegiance to his indoctrinated discipline and a penchant to recount a terrifying choice of occupation, is a perfect manifestation of both. It so transpired that said Colonel, deep into the conflict zone during the Kargil war, found himself and a few other comrades from his company, pinned down in a bunker in the direct line of fire from the enemy. One of his bunker co-occupants, Peter, a lower ranked officer, was keen to note that the Colonel has misplaced his helmet. Without any consideration for his personal safety, Peter offered Colonel his own helmet, which Colonel accepted after much protest and under heavy duress. An unknown time lapse forward and a stray bullet from enemy fire ricochets off the helmet, keeping the Colonel safe. Not believing his luck, he turns to Peter to thank him for his foresightedness. The bullet had bounced off the helmet into Peter.

Wars are won on the back of Peter and his ilk. We earn the privilege of reminiscing tales of brotherhood through these moments of sheer selflessness. Remember the brave-hearts who touched down at Normandy on D-Day who only had the sea watching their back.

“Bhaichara” be thy name. Telling that one of the most contrasting examples of brotherhood should come from the pioneers of human evolution studies that are widely accepted in the modern world. Charles Darwin, on the back of almost twenty years of isolated research

on the concept of human evolution receives news from a friend, Alfred Wallace of similar research findings. In an act intrinsically reflective of human nature and ironically defying the fundamental concept of survival of the fittest, Darwin rightfully acknowledged Wallace's work alongside his own in front of the world. There is something very human about altruism regarding recognition of others. The architect of the Origin of Species, which extols the virtues of singular triumph was human enough to exemplify the existence of kinship. History is littered with countless examples of similar human acts of brotherhood.

There is something disarmingly ensuring about knowing that there is a safety net or cushion of somebody having your back. Whether it is a nudge in the right direction or a reminder to stay true to one's values and commitments, 'guiding lights' are some of our most cherished relationships. They are the most leveraged when the going gets tough and the most conveniently brushed aside during spring season. How often do we meet those on whose shoulders we have cried on? How about those straight shooters who tell us exactly when we are wrong? There is a selection bias in choosing mentors, feedback engines and our own propensity to be able to be led.

Batman and Robin, Bonnie and Clyde, Holmes and Watson, Mac and Cheese, Tom and Jerry, Calvin and Hobbes. You get the picture. The sum of parts is most usually better than the whole. A key observation in these legendary examples is that the leadership equation is fluid and dynamic. There is a hierarchy agnostic equation that solidifies relationships and helps them endure the trials of time. Selectively donning the hat of Batman or Robin or even the Alfred: is the hallmark of good leaders. It considers dynamism of the real world and human inadequacies in maintaining a high benchmark or performance.

Which brings us to the emotion that potentially forms the nucleus of any relationship – trust. How do we know the world we live in is the real? Unfortunately, life does not afford us totems that the protagonists of the Nolan masterpiece, The Inception, had at their disposal to tell between the real world and dreams. Relationships must create and sustain tangible totems between those protagonists to build the serenity and reliance on trust. This is easier said than done. Every


moment in our respective journeys give us opportunities to build this trust but the subjectivity around our actions plays a defining role in whether it takes shape.

How do good mentors decide how much of freedom and room for failure should be afforded to their apprentices? When does Master Shifu realize that Po is ready to take on the world? There is a journey of self-realization that the master and student, you and your mentor alike go through. The receiver in this equation is inherently closer to acceptance of their own misgivings while at the same time, the giver learns to appreciate and hone their gifts of better understanding. The beauty of this equation lies in the ease of reversibility of these roles. One moment you are the giver, the next you shall receive. To be open and accepting of this duality showcases the hallmarks of a good leader.


Dylan Thomas gave us a thought for the ages. Written in more sombre personal times, his words hold true beyond reasons apparent.

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Rage, rage against the dying of that light. Because I got your back, brother.



**One had to be dissatisfied
enough to try something
different. So sometimes it is
to experiment with failure.**



**There is something very human
about altruism regarding
recognition of others.**

WHEN CONNECTIVITY DISCONNECTS

It was 2008. Owning a portable DVD player was still cool. Blogger, yes that platform where you wrote whatever you felt like, was still the biggest social media platform in the world. With 222 million unique monthly visitors. A startup from Palo Alto, called Facebook, had roughly 175 million unique monthly visitors and no like button. MySpace was still around. But Orkut, the social media site that millennials first tasted digital stardom with, was in the intensive care unit.

This is 2018. Facebook is valued at over \$500 Billion. There are 2.07 billion monthly active users. The Facebook Like & Share Buttons are viewed 10 on million sites other than Facebook, every day. Oh, and just as a passing statement, every 60 seconds see the following activity on Facebook: 510,000 comments are posted; 293,000 statuses are updated, and 136,000 photos are uploaded. This platform has single-handedly changed the way people communicate with others. Not since the invention of the telephone has something impacted global communication, the way Facebook has. Hell, it is alleged that it even impacted the selection of the most powerful leader of the world! That speaks volumes about the company. The idea. And in essence, the reality of our world today. We may not like it. We may not want it. But here we are. There is no denying it.

But, this was not how it was all along. Before Indian's filled the internet with Good Morning messages on WhatsApp, connectivity and mobile phone were a method of discovering and connecting. People who didn't know how to reach a friend's place, could turn on the map on their phone and go meet a friend they had not met in ages. They could even set out for a family outing to a location never before explored, without the fear of getting lost. With a phone, an internet connection and some common sense, getting lost was no longer an

option. How cool was that? People could dig through networks and connect with old friends.

There is a famous news article which was published in The New York Times that narrates how a seventy-year-old decided to organize a school reunion using Facebook. He created an event, and then went about searching for his classmates, using possible clues available on Facebook. He changed the date of the event 13 times, but eventually, twenty one out of thirty-five students did meet. Isn't this awesome! Here was a technology which allowed you to relive your life, discover new things, go to places you have never been too. And yet, somehow, today it seems all too intrusive. Too all-consuming. Something that we must control. Something that kids would do better without. Today, it's a monster we don't want!

In December of 2017, leaders from across the globe met to discuss the need for every nation to meet the Paris Agreement. There is a strong push for adopting electric vehicles as the primary mode of transportations in the coming decade. This will not only help us reduce usage of fossil fuels but also save the planet.

Now, go back to 1885. When Karl Benz introduced a gasoline automobile powered by an internal combustion engine which had three wheels, four cycles, engine and chassis form of a single unit, the only thought that everyone would have had was, "how wonderful! Now we can go from one place to another, without getting tired!" The world would have rejoiced! As the industry progressed, and more and more kilometres were added in a single journey, new avenues opened up. Families could meet again. People could go to places they never imagined going to. The world started to open up.


This does sound very similar to what was happening with mobile devices back in 2008, doesn't it? Because it is. Every technology brings with it, a possibility of utilizing it for good or destroying the world with it. Humans have had the tendency of taking the best things available to them and breaking them apart.

So where do we go from here? Have we come to the brink of mobile addiction/destruction? Are our lives now looking at a dark


age of digital alter-egos? With 47% of the human population using the internet (it is projected that by 2025, half of the world population will be living in water-stressed areas, and more than half of world population will have internet access), are we in danger of becoming “lost in digital space” generation/species? Not really. I still know of people who are not on Facebook. Two of my best friends, both media professionals, have never seen the world of Facebook. Some may claim that they are more productive and social, but that’s a chapter by itself. Yet, that is a reassuring check. It is not that difficult to survive without disconnecting. As part of my other commitments, I frequently visit a place of interaction where using mobile devices is massively restricted. Not by force. But by choice. It is a place where human stories are used as a learning tool. People talk. A lot of times but yet, at the end of it all, it leaves everyone around with a strange sense of togetherness, stability, and calmness. For me, it also goes to a great extent of recharging me.

With all its advancement, with artificial intelligence and predictive learning, technology has so far not been able to show emotion. It can evoke emotions, but it cannot replace the joy of a hug, the happiness of cuddling up with your dog, the tingling sensation of falling in love, the deep passion of gazing into the eyes of your lover across the hall. Technology cannot yet make the good morning message feel as if it will really make my morning good. It is far from it.

We must learn to master the power and not become slaves to it. Someone famously said, “Everyone needs an opportunity to discover, or rediscover what God gave them.” Now is your opportunity. Don’t Google who said that. Ask around. It will give you an opportunity to speak to others.



**There is something disarmingly
ensuring about knowing that
there is a safety net or cushion of
somebody having your back.**



**With a phone, an internet
connection and some common
sense, getting lost was no
longer an option.**

REKINDLING THE LOVE

Love, a four letter word with an overhyped meaning and a non-narcotic drug which made people go crazy, is what I thought it was. Ignored, avoided, hid, ran and escaped, but none worked. Running so hard, the feet trembled, and I tripped, only to realize that very pot-hole that I am falling in, is overtly filled with the drug of love. The world around changed and it was the hidden passion for food and cooking that I discovered. The drug of love was doing the magic and soon I lost myself to baking, cooking and reinventing the traditional delicious.

Days passed by and so did months, and the love for food started to dilute (Discovered in the round four of a top culinary show, that it is scripted). I realized it was a time to bring some spark and drama in the relationship and gave it a break for a while. I moved on with my long-term crush - Marketing and Public Relations. Weeks after moving on, F&B made a re-entry in the life, but this time professionally (When I got a chance to work with JSM Corporation and Café Noir). Excitement grew each day, it was the best of both the worlds, I had a chance to be with both the crush and love, without betraying any. A picture perfect threesome!

Time passed by, the first love(F&B), moved out of life when I chose to move to Mumbai. Regretting nothing, I happily walked through the doors of Ideosphere, to work with a travel and web-content client. I sat on the ride and the journey started, only to realize that this roller-coaster has multiple speed breakers. Knowing nothing about each other, the relation started with a mutual dislike. Days passed by, things got transparent and the understanding grew. Dislikes changed to admiration and just when I was about to call it 'love', a storm blew. With no confrontations, the paths got changed and so did the daily routine.

It was after losing the client, I realized that the sector was my second love. I missed, talked, bitched and longed for it each day until someone of the similar sector walked in through the dark space. The light struck, and it wasn't 'one', they were two of the similar sector – the ex and a new muse. Just when the work with both is all started to rekindle, I have understood that: never judge an entity without knowing their story/sector, and never rush for new things – give the old ones time and be transparent.


Being a fresher in the team of the experienced professionals it was very difficult to cope with in the first few days. But it is the friendly aura of the organization that helps one to understand what they did not before. Most importantly, the team is not subjected to hierarchy, therefore, from junior associates to managers everyone is open to help each other whenever need be. I was in love with the office and its culture. Everything was just perfect!

Few of my learnings throughout my journey were: do not judge anyone in your first meeting, work from your heart, and if in case the loved one is separating because there is nothing new then let it go, and if it comes back to you, then that is what the actual success looks like.

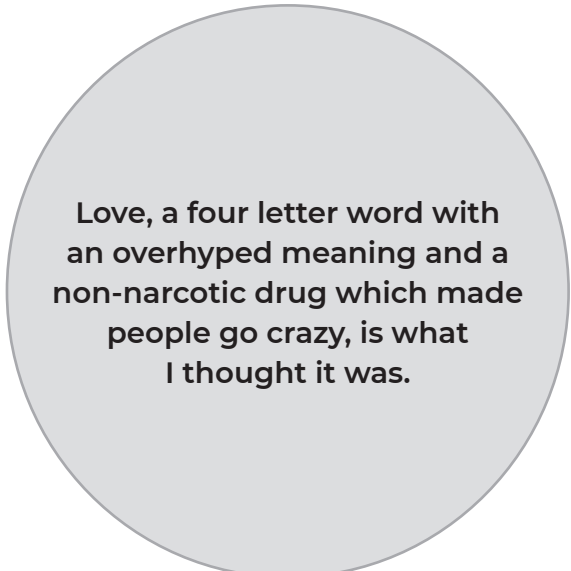
This time too, I worked from my heart but didn't get completely involved in it because there were many mandates which were going on at that time, but I personally worked on this mandate too. This time the approach was different as I already knew the journey was short and mandate is not going to be with me after a period. This second mandate helped me to be more creative and think out of the box for their product. Once again, I successfully completed the mandate. This time while completing the mandate, I had a satisfying feeling in my heart only because the client came back to me after seeing the previous results. I was just rekindling the love

Hence, the first love will always be the first and will always hold a very special feeling in my heart. Due to my first love, I got a recognition in the industry and received lots of other clients from the similar industry.

Hence, the moral of the story is “If it ain't broke, don't fix it” as sometimes, we feel that we have lost the love forever but that is not true. If you are actually made for each other then the universe will put all its efforts to get both the lovers back to each other's life. I trust the Universe a lot, do you?



**We must learn to master
the power of technology
and not become
slaves to it.**



**Love, a four letter word with
an overhyped meaning and a
non-narcotic drug which made
people go crazy, is what
I thought it was.**

WHEN WE BECOMES ME

Does divorce exist in fairy tales when the curtains fall?

Divorce is a strong term. It is a mostly feared term and looked down upon by society in general. But for some, divorce is a second chance at life. It means having an incredible opportunity to make better choices, the ones that are casually undermined before.

The best thing about walking away from a bad chapter is the ability to be your own person again. It is a chance to pave your own path without having to compromise or even consult another person. It is a life with endless possibilities.

For me, divorce was just that. A new life!

'We' became 'Me' and containing my excitement was not likely. It was in all the simple things. Waking up alone, cooking only for myself and finally dripping in the sweat of independence. I felt it in every breath I took, a new tingle of fresh energy. It was like experiencing a calm sea after a storm.

What keeps a marriage alive? It's tough to say. But can you focus ALL your energy in doing so? Not if you have dreams, aspirations and an inherent need to reach for the stars. Marriages fail for many reasons and often not for a lack of trying. For better or for worse – the truth is that life isn't that simple. It is more complicated than vows and oaths.

The foundation of all relationships, be it personal or professional, is a give and take model. No one wants to put in all that effort if they don't receive anything in return. That is a sour end of a bad deal.

Marriages are contracts that are signed. They are meant to be beneficial for both parties. That is the same model with clients, with your employer and with every new connection you make. Once I

reached the status of a divorcee, I saw everything differently. I saw it in black and white - no additional hues, no distractions and no tolerance for irrational notions.

Every day I would finish my day at work and come back to an empty home. I had everything I needed. I would make a little food, watch a little TV and sigh contently. But again, it was in all actuality an empty home. I didn't have to be bothered by chores, by nagging voices or any more responsibility. But then again, I didn't have anyone asking me about my day. I could go out with my friends without an afterthought, party all night and fall asleep in the clothes I wore all day. But then again, I didn't have anyone waiting for me, watching the clock and wishing I was safe.

The novelty of my newfound freedom wore away quicker than I anticipated. The idea of 'Love' and the institution of marriage has existed for eons and suddenly, the reason why made sense. For me, my inspiration to write vanished. I lost my muse.

'Me' being just 'Me' forever was a thought I couldn't fathom anymore. 'Me' needed more.


It's like you look up at the hot summer sky and wish for rain. And when the Earth is soaked by rain, you look up and wish for the sun to shine again.

The only thing that changed for me is I knew what I wanted. I wanted a 'We' again but this time, an improved version. I had grown as a person, become more aware of my expectations and was ready to sign a contract again, only this time with additional clauses. I had taken out those juvenile notions. Fairy tales left behind and put in its place on my map of expectations.


Can any algorithm guarantee eternal love now? No.

Can I tell for sure it will be everything I expect it to be? No.

But I still want 'We' as just 'Me' really sucks.



**Never judge a person
or situation without
knowing the story
behind it.**



**It means having an
incredible opportunity to make
better choices, the ones that are
casually undermined before.**

EDITOR'S NOTE

Relationships are an integral part of life, which is to say, they make us who we are. Our experiences and learnings mould us into the person we are currently today. This is a universal phenomenon - that's what makes relationships even more intriguing. Every single one of us has been brought into this world by means of a certain relation. But what we often fail to keep in mind is that all relationships while different, are all part of the same melting pot. There is something to learn from each one, and that helps us for the next one. Through this book, we hope to inculcate some of our own learnings with relationships - personal or professional and highlight certain points which helped us grow.

Similar to almost every 18 year old, I too was a confused soul. I wasn't necessarily the type of person who would attend lectures in college or even study to learn for that matter. It was only a matter of time before my parents had a very serious talk with me. Easy to gather what it was about, I was ready for anything they threw at me.

"Kaushik, what are you doing with your life? You don't attend college, you are always out with your friends, you are waking up at noon", and the list went on and on while I silently screamed in my head. Deep down, I knew they were right, and I had to change some things, pronto! The first thing that came to my mind was - I'll go get a job!

But who in the right mind would hire an 18-year-old with little or no training in absolutely any professional skill at all?

And this is where it all started, back in 2011. My brother Aniruddha and his business partner Minal had just started their own outfit - "Ideosphere".

Up till then, I had no idea that I would ever get into communications and media. It was literally all just a blur to me. I knew I had a way

with words, but what about it? Aniruddha suggested that I joined Ideosphere and try my hand at Public Relations. My first thought was - what in God's name is that all about?. But as he explained it to me, I started feeling more positive about it and I agreed. There was nothing to lose, right?

After about 18 months of interning, I knew one thing for sure, and that was - PR is just not me. I wanted to do something creative, something exciting. I wanted to leave, get into Marketing and Advertising and become a copywriter. I finally knew what I wanted to do. That's when a chat with Minal over some coffee took place. That was probably one of the most productive chats I've had back then. She told me one thing - "Kaushik, we understand why you're leaving, and that's completely fine. But I hope you know what you want to do after this, what you want to work towards, have an end goal you envision. Always remember, Ideosphere's doors will forever be open to you." Those words forever stuck with me.

Throughout the course of my career, I've worked with Ideosphere and its Social Media wing - Ourbit a total of three times. I always left to find myself and to find more opportunities, but always ended up back to base.

That being said, my time at Ideosphere/Ourbit wasn't always rainbows and butterflies. In fact, it was pretty stressful. As much as Minal and I got along and understood each other's wavelengths, there was always something we couldn't see eye to eye on. And that caused plenty of rifts between the two of us.

Since the other co-founder was my very own blood, Aniruddha refrained from giving attention to such things. Of course, there were times where he didn't spare me from his infamous wrath, but at the end of the day, I was left in the hands of Minal.

As I was almost with Ideosphere since its inception, I just got it. I knew Ideosphere like the back of my hand. How it speaks, how it breathes - everything. Which is why throughout my time at Ourbit, one of my accounts was Ideosphere itself. But like usual, trouble started brewing between Minal and me.

I finally resigned from Ourbit in June 2018 for my final time to venture out and start my own agency - Blu Digital. Minal and I had not spoken for months after my departure. Safe to say that Blu Digital was started because of a fight.

One fine day, I get a call from Minal regarding a book Ideosphere was planning on developing. She explained the concept to me, and I was sold. Even a strained relationship with Minal is one that I still cherish and respect.

After all the fights, the yelling and screaming, the back and forth stinker mails not just with Minal, but from Ideosphere, I had vowed never to work for/with them again. But my relationship with Ideosphere falls in the typical love/hate category.

I have edited this book for Ideosphere purely out of hate-filled love, and that says all it has to.

Kaushik Atul Bhagwat

Founder,
Blu Digital

Contributors



Minal D'Rozario



Aniruddha Bhagwat



Shoebahmed Shaikh



Mayur Milan



Arpita Chavan



Avnee Jena



Gulshan Kaur Batra



Monica Mantri



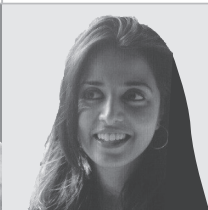
Nandita Sharma



Mashun Raikhan



Smruti Mehta



Vaidehi Garigipati



Namrata Shetty



Rajarshi Bhattacharjee



Bhushan Astulkar



Sijo John



Tripti Jain



Dharmesh Dave



Prerna Khindri



Harshad Mone

The story, all names, characters, and incidents portrayed in this book are fictitious. No identification with actual persons (living or deceased), places, buildings, and products is intended or should be inferred. No animals were harmed during the production and development of this book.



www.ideosphereconsulting.com