

FIND *Your NBV* **NEXT BEST VERSION**

Unlock Your Potential, One Bold Step
at a Time

WRITTEN BY
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DEDICATION

To the loving memory of my late mother, whose strength, compassion, and unwavering faith continue to live within me.

Though you are no longer here, your values guide my every step, and your love remains the quiet force behind all that I strive to become.

To my beloved friends, late Creswell McDonald and the late Karthikeyan, whose friendship illuminated my youth and whose memories still bring warmth to my heart.

You left too soon, yet your laughter, dreams, and spirit live on in the stories we shared and in the man I have become because of you.

This book is a tribute to those who have journeyed ahead of me, but whose light continues to shine through every lesson, every choice, and every heartbeat.

May their love and legacy inspire all who seek to become their Next Best Version.

DISCLAIMER

The thoughts, views, reflections, stories, and experiences expressed in this book are entirely personal and written in the author's individual capacity. They do not represent the official views, positions, or policies of any organization, institution, or its leadership.

All references to leaders, organizations, or institutions are based on information that is publicly available and are cited appropriately at the end of the relevant chapters. Such references are included solely for illustrative and educational purposes.

All models, frameworks, flowcharts, and original quotations presented in this book have been conceptualized, designed, and created by the author, unless otherwise stated. The abbreviation **CPP** used throughout the book refers to the author, **Chella Pandian Pitchai**.

PREFACE

There comes a moment in every life when we pause long enough for a question to rise from within—quietly, honestly, and irresistibly:

“Is this truly the best version of me?” Should I stop here? Or can I go further?

For me, that moment arrived unexpectedly—not in triumph, not in defeat, but in the stillness between ordinary responsibilities. In that silent pause, life held up a mirror instead of a milestone. And in that mirror, a journey began—a journey that eventually became *Your Next Best Version (NBV)*.

NBV did not originate in a classroom. It was not born from theories, frameworks, or models. It emerged from real people, real experiences, real struggle, real mistakes, and real reflection. It was shaped by highs that brought pride, lows that built resilience, and countless moments that forced me to rebuild myself again and again.

Over the years, I realised something profound:

Growth is not a straight line—it is a spiral.

A movement inward to rediscover who you are,

And outward to redefine who you can become.

The post-pandemic years sharpened this truth even more. The world slowed down. Life felt fragile. Priorities shifted. Dreams were questioned. And in that global stillness, I understood something essential:

Life doesn't always give us second chances. But it always gives us the NEXT chance.

And in that next chance lies the possibility of reinvention.

As I write this preface, I am filled with gratitude—not for accomplishments, but for everything and everyone who shaped me.

My journey began in a humble background, where struggle was a teacher and simplicity was grounding. Growing up with less did not limit my life—it deepened my lessons. It taught me endurance, empathy, and the ability to keep moving even when the path ahead was unclear.

But the greatest wisdom came not from circumstances—it came from people.

Life has a remarkable intelligence; it sends us the right people at the right time.

Some guide you with kindness.

Some challenge you with difficulty.

Some inspire you with their vision.

Some correct you with honesty.

Some shake you enough to make you grow.

Over time, I learned a truth that shaped my worldview:

EVERY PERSON IS A TEACHER

Good parents, loving relationships, supportive friends, ethical business partners, empowering managers, and inspiring leaders teach you what to do—how to lead, trust, love, aspire, and grow.

Difficult parents, broken relationships, toxic friends, challenging business partners, misguided managers, and flawed leaders teach you what NOT to do—what to avoid, what to protect, and which paths to never walk again.

Both sides—the kind and the difficult—shape your maturity.

Both contribute to your NBV.

This understanding deepened when I spoke to elderly individuals nearing the end of their lives. Their regrets were hauntingly similar:

“I wish I had more time.”

“I wish I had taken more risks.”

“I wish I had followed my passion.”

Some even wished for something impossible—a time machine or a guaranteed *Next Best Birth (NBB)*.

But life does not promise guarantees.

It offers us this one life.

And that is why the pursuit of NBV becomes urgent and essential.

One of the most defining chapters of my journey began when I joined Biocon at the age of 20. What I found there was far more than a workplace—it was a living university of leadership, character, discipline, and purpose. Each day brought learning, discovery, and refinement.

I owe deep gratitude to Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, my inspiration for over three decades.

But equally meaningful were the countless leaders, mentors, managers, colleagues, and friends who shaped me—some softly, some sternly, and many unknowingly.

Some pushed me to dream bigger.

Some challenged me to think sharper.

Some corrected my mistakes.

Some held me accountable.

Some lifted me when I doubted myself.

Some inspired me simply by the way they lived and worked.

Each one contributed a piece to my NBV, and I honour them in this book.

Then came the story that changed everything—a simple story, but one that forever shifted my perspective.

THE TURNING POINT OF MY NBV PHILOSOPHY

Two workers were chiselling stones at a construction site.

When asked what they were doing, the first man replied,

“I’m shaping a block of stone. That’s my job.”

His world ended with the stone in front of him.

The second man, doing the same physical work, looked up with quiet pride and said,

“I’m helping build a great fortress... a cathedral that will inspire generations.”

Same task.

Same hammer.

Same effort.

But completely different vision.

One saw a job.

The other saw a legacy.

One saw the pillar.

The other saw the purpose beyond the pillar.

This story stayed with me because it reflects a fundamental truth about life:

Your present situation may be small, ordinary, or difficult, but your vision must always be larger than your circumstances.

Accept where you are today,

but never settle for it.

Never limit your identity to your present role or struggle.

Let your NBV be the cathedral you are building,
even if, for now, you are just chiselling stones.

It was this story that helped me realise something even more powerful.

NBV IS NOT A ONE-TIME DESTINATION.

You don't find your best version and stop there.

You don't arrive and declare it done.

In the NBV journey,

“Best” is never a full stop—it is a comma.

A pause.

A reminder.

A gentle push.

Keep going.

Keep rising.

Keep becoming.

NBV is the hunger to grow beyond your last milestone.

It is the refusal to settle.

It is the courage to believe that the next version of you is still waiting to be discovered.

This book is a tribute—to the journey, the people, the interdependencies, the struggles, and the cathedral-building mindset that shaped me. I do not write as an expert. I write as a fellow traveller—someone who is still chiselling, still rising, still discovering his Next Best Version.

Wherever you stand today—beginning, rebuilding, seeking direction, or rising—your NBV is ahead of you.

NBV is not a milestone.

It is not a title.

It is not a final version.

NBV IS A MINDSET.
A DISCIPLINE.
A DAILY COMMITMENT.
A LIFELONG EVOLUTION.

As you turn these pages, I hope you find courage in your challenges, clarity in your reflections, and strength in your relationships. I hope you honour the teachers—both kind and difficult—who shaped your journey. And I hope you walk toward your NBV with conviction, humility, and hope.

This is your invitation:

to pause,

to rediscover,

to redefine,

to rise.

Keep going, Keep it going & Keep on going!

With gratitude and purpose,

Chella Pandian Pitchai (CPP)

INTRODUCTION

The opportunity to rewind time and relive your life with the wisdom and experience you've gained is a captivating thought. We often reflect on the past and wonder what we could have done differently—the choices we might have made, the risks we could have taken, or the paths we might have explored. The desire to revisit those moments with a clearer perspective—one shaped by the lessons life has taught us—is something many of us quietly wish for.

Yet, as much as we may long to turn back the clock, one truth remains: time is finite, and the past cannot be changed. But what can be changed and transformed is the way we live from this moment forward.

This is where the concept of the *Next Best Version (NBV)* comes alive. Instead of dwelling on what could have been, NBV helps you focus on what can still be. It's about taking charge of your journey today, and shaping the future you truly desire. The NBV mindset empowers you to discover and embrace your unique potential, creating a life filled with purpose, fulfillment, and lasting impact.

This book is not merely about achieving career success or personal growth; it's about creating a life that aligns with your deepest values, passions, and purpose—regardless of where you come from or where you stand today. Whether you are a student beginning your journey, a working professional striving for meaning, an entrepreneur building your vision, or a retiree seeking renewal and contribution, the principles of NBV will help you make the most of your time and energy.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF NBV

The beauty of the *Next Best Version* philosophy lies in its universality and inclusivity. It transcends generations, nationalities, genders,

professions, and experience levels. It speaks to every human being—anyone who believes there is still something more within them waiting to unfold.

Whether you are beginning a new chapter, rebuilding after failure, or searching for renewed direction in your later years, *NBV* meets you where you are—and guides you toward who you can become.

Through a blend of personal stories, real-life experiences, insights from leaders, and actionable tools, *Next Best Version* serves as a roadmap for anyone, anywhere—who seeks to live with clarity, passion, and purpose.

A TRULY GLOBAL AND INCLUSIVE MESSAGE

This book is written for a global audience—for people from all generations, nationalities, and walks of life. It is gender-agnostic, profession-agnostic, and experience-agnostic, meaning that anyone, regardless of their background, expertise, or cultural context, can benefit from its message.

Whether you're a school-going student, a professional navigating your career, an entrepreneur innovating for impact, or a retiree embracing new possibilities, *Next Best Version* empowers you to pursue growth, rediscover your passions, and design a life that truly reflects who you are.

Its message is simple yet profound:

Your best version is still ahead of you.

It's never too late to begin, and no one is ever too far along to find new direction. With *Next Best Version*, you can rewrite your narrative, realign with your purpose, and create an impact that transcends boundaries.

KEY USPS

Personal stories and anecdotes: Authentic experiences from the author's own life make the content relatable, engaging, and practical.

Quotes and stories from leaders: Selected chapters feature inspiring examples and insights from leaders and their NBV journeys.

Takeaways and reflection questions: Each chapter includes key lessons and thought-provoking questions to help readers internalize concepts and apply them in their own lives.

Standalone chapters: Each chapter can be read independently or sequentially—allowing readers to explore specific topics or experience the complete NBV journey.

Lessons from real-life observations: Insights drawn from observing people, leaders, and real-world behaviors demonstrate the practical application of NBV principles.

Throughout this book, I have developed and included original frameworks, models, and tools to guide you toward achieving your *Next Best Version* (NBV). These are the outcomes of years of personal experience, deep reflection, and research. My intent is simple—to offer you a structured, practical, and transformative approach to personal and professional growth.

Because the journey to your *Next Best Version* begins not with changing the past—but with believing in what’s still possible.

To your journey of growth, purpose, and becoming your Next Best Version

– CPP

IS THIS BOOK MEANT FOR YOU?

This book is for everyone who believes that life is a journey of continuous growth—a journey to evolve, expand, and become their *Next Best Version*.

It is written for all generations, nationalities, genders, and backgrounds—for people of all ages, experiences, and walks of life. Whether you are taking your first steps toward your dreams, standing tall after a setback, or reflecting on the meaning of success, this book will meet you where you are and help you rise higher.

Each chapter can be read on its own—as a standalone reflection and guide—or experienced as a sequential journey of transformation. Whether you open any page at random or move chapter by chapter, every idea in this book is designed to inspire, empower, and move you forward toward your personal and professional evolution.

THIS BOOK IS FOR:

Winners who want to stay at the top of their game.

Strivers who are seeking direction and clarity in their path.

Those who have failed, yet still hold the courage to rise again.

Individuals who are struggling but refuse to give up.

Progressing minds who are already growing and evolving each day.

Aspiring dreamers determined to turn their vision into reality.

Inspiring leaders who want to empower and uplift others.

Accomplished individuals who seek to reach their next summit.

Beginners setting out on their journey with hope and ambition.

Organizations committed to building cultures of growth and excellence.

Communities and nations striving to create a lasting positive impact.

Students eager to explore their passions and discover their purpose.

Career starters building strong foundations for their professional path.

Entrepreneurs driven to create meaningful, sustainable success.

Women leaders breaking barriers and lifting others as they rise.

Homemakers rediscovering their dreams and redefining their roles.

Retirees who continue to live with curiosity, purpose, and contribution.

Elders who share their wisdom, stories, and strength with the world.

If you have failed or fallen, struggled or succeeded, progressed or persevered, dreamed or inspired others, then this book is meant for you.

It is a guide for those who dare to believe that there's always a next level—that growth never stops, and that the best version of yourself is still waiting to emerge.

So, wherever you are in your journey - this is your moment to pause, reflect, and rise. Because your *Next Best Version* is not somewhere out there; it already lives within you, waiting to be discovered.

“Becoming your *Next Best Version* is not about doing more - it's about being more of who you truly are.” – CPP

HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS BOOK

The book is divided into five sections, each with five chapters, making a total of 25 chapters. These sections are designed to guide you through a transformative journey—from understanding the concept of the *Next Best Version (NBV)* to sustaining and growing your achievements.

To get the most out of this book, explore its unique features, which are designed to enhance your reading experience and facilitate personal growth. Here's how to navigate the book:

Standalone chapters: Each chapter can be read independently, allowing you to explore the sections that resonate with you most, or read the book from cover to cover for a complete understanding of the NBV framework.

Frameworks and models: The book introduces original frameworks and models (developed by the author) to provide structured guidance on personal growth, mentoring, coaching, resilience, and leadership. These frameworks are your practical tools to navigate challenges, reflect on progress, and plan actionable steps.

Quotes and lessons from leaders and role models: Selected chapters feature quotes, stories, and examples from leaders who embody principles of resilience, growth, and NBV. These provide inspiration and practical insights you can incorporate into your own journey.

Personal stories and anecdotes: Each chapter includes stories from the author's life and experiences, making the content relatable and engaging. Reflect on these stories to see how the author's journey can inform your own path.

Key takeaways and visual guides: Chapters provide key insights summarized in clear takeaways. Many chapters also include visual

guides of frameworks, models, and concepts to make ideas easier to grasp and apply in real life. These visual guides help readers internalize and implement the lessons practically.

References: Each chapter includes a references section listing the sources of quotes, research, or external insights cited. This ensures credibility while distinguishing between author-created frameworks and models, which are original contributions and do not require external citation.

NBV guided reflection space: Thought-provoking questions are included at the end of the book, following the conclusion, to help you pause, reflect, journal, and internalize the key concepts. These guided prompts are designed to encourage deeper thinking and support the active application of the insights in both your personal and professional life.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS BOOK

1. Standalone Chapters

Each chapter can be read independently.

You may begin with any chapter based on your interest or need.

2. Frameworks and Models

Original frameworks and structured models developed by the author.

3. Quotes and Lessons from Leaders

Features quotes, stories, and examples from leaders.

4. Personal Journey and Lessons Learnt

Includes insights from author's personal journey and lessons from leaders.

5. Key Takeaways and Visual Guides

Summarizes insights and includes visual frameworks.

6. References

Lists sources of quotes, research, and external insights to support further exploration.

7. NBV Guided Reflection Space

Provides thought-provoking questions for reflection.

THE NEXT BEST VERSION (NBV) FRAMEWORK

The NBV framework is structured into five comprehensive sections, each focusing on a critical aspect of personal growth and development. These sections guide readers through a transformative journey, from understanding the concept of NBV to sustaining and growing their achievements.

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING NBV (CHAPTERS 1–5)

This section lays the foundation for the concept of *Next Best Version*. It introduces self-awareness, values, passions, and goal-setting. Readers gain a comprehensive understanding of what NBV is and how to begin their journey.

SECTION 2: OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO NBV (CHAPTERS 6–10)

This section addresses common obstacles that hinder NBV progress. Topics include self-bias, trust, fear, negative self-talk, and building resilience. By overcoming these challenges, readers can navigate their path to achieving their *Next Best Version* more effectively.

SECTION 3: BUILDING A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR NBV (CHAPTERS 11–15)

A supportive environment is essential for growth. This section highlights the importance of positive influences, supportive communities, and mentors/coaches. Readers receive practical guidance on building networks that foster personal and professional development.

SECTION 4: SUSTAINING AND GROWING YOUR NBV (CHAPTERS 16–20)

This section focuses on strategies to maintain and grow your NBV over time. Topics include self-coaching, lifelong learning, motivation, overcoming plateaus, and sustaining long-term success.

Readers learn how to maintain momentum and continue developing their NBV.

SECTION 5: HELPING OTHERS FIND THEIR NBV & LEAVING A LEGACY (CHAPTERS 21–25)

The final section explores simplicity, mentorship, community building, and paying it forward. Readers learn how to help others achieve their NBV and leave a lasting legacy, emphasizing the importance of sharing knowledge and experience.

Each section is crafted to provide a comprehensive, cohesive guide to achieving your *Next Best Version*. By following these five sections, readers gain deeper self-understanding, practical skills, and strategies to achieve their personal and professional goals.

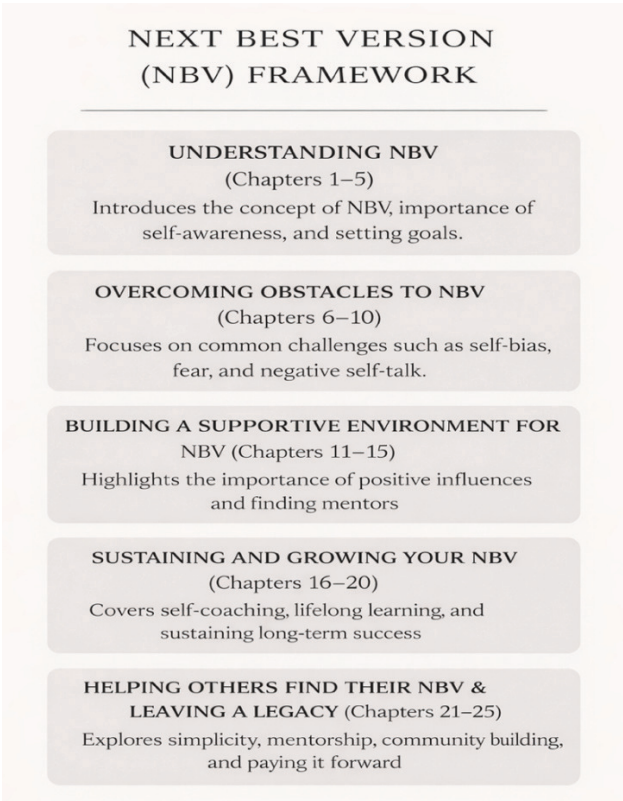


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SECTION 1
UNDERSTANDING NBV (NEXT BEST
VERSION)

CHAPTER 1:

NBV IS NOT A DESTINATION—IT IS AN UNENDING JOURNEY

A FOUNDATIONAL EXPLORATION OF GROWTH, IDENTITY, AND BECOMING

Every human life is shaped by one persistent question:

“Who am I becoming?”

This question does not arrive loudly.

It arrives softly—in pauses, transitions, moments of discomfort, and flashes of longing.

It arrives when you realize you are not where you used to be, yet not fully where you want to be.

It arrives when the version of you that you’ve been living no longer feels like the version you are meant to be.

This is where the journey of your *Next Best Version* (NBV) begins.

NBV is not a concept of perfection.

NBV is not about changing everything at once.

NBV is not about chasing some final, ideal version of yourself.

NBV is the quiet, consistent, unending expansion of your potential—one step at a time, one insight at a time, one choice at a time.

It is the shift from who you were yesterday to who you can become tomorrow.

It is the conscious rejection of stagnation.

It is the refusal to settle for the default version of your life.

NBV is not a destination.

NBV is an operating system.

A way of thinking.

A way of responding.

A way of rising.

And like every powerful transformation, it begins with understanding the patterns that keep us from becoming our next selves.

“The Human Loop of Stagnation: “I See → I Feel → I Do...”

Every day, we move through life observing situations, people, opportunities, and challenges.

I SEE

the unmet goals, the patterns, the flaws, the potential, the gap between present and possibility.

I FEEL

frustration, disappointment, jealousy, fear, excitement, overwhelm, ambition.

And then—instead of moving forward—many people fall into a familiar loop:

- I criticize
- I complain
- I compare
- I comment
- I catastrophize
- I collapse internally
- I convince myself to wait
- I conclude, “Maybe this is not for me.”

This pattern feels active, but it is not growth—it is emotional activity without progress.

Growth begins at the moment you step out of this loop and into the transformative final step:

I DO

“I Do” is not dramatic.

“I Do” is intentional.

“I Do” is the single moment where transformation becomes real.

Because action—even the smallest action—breaks the gravitational pull of stagnation.

NBV is built not by intensity, but by continuity.

THE DESTINATION TRAP

Why Most People Never Begin Their NBV Journey

The greatest barrier to NBV is not lack of ambition or lack of skill.

It is the Destination Trap—the belief that life is supposed to have “one perfect place” where everything falls into place.

The Destination Trap sounds like:

- “When I have enough money, I’ll start.”
- “When the timing is better, I’ll grow.”
- “When someone supports me, I’ll take the next step.”
- “When I feel confident, I’ll try.”
- “When life settles, I’ll become who I want to be.”

But here is the truth:

Life does not settle.

Life expands or contracts based on your actions—not your conditions.

Waiting for perfect conditions is the fastest route to never starting.

NBV breaks the Destination Trap by shifting focus to what you can do today—with what you have, where you are, who you are.

THE POWER OF NBV THINKING

A New Lens for Growth

NBV thinking rewires the mind from:

“Someday...” → “Today...”

“I wish...” → “I choose...”

“I should...” → “I will...”

NBV thinking is rooted in micro-progress—the belief that small, meaningful steps taken consistently create massive transformation over time.

It’s the mindset that shifts you from:

- Fear to courage
- Confusion to clarity
- Passive hope to purposeful action
- Reacting to responding
- Drifting to directing

NBV thinking is not motivational.

It is structural.

It changes the architecture of how you operate.

STORY 1—THE RUNNER

The Myth of the Finish Line

Every marathon runner learns a profound truth:

The finish line does not transform you—the process does.

A young runner trains, imagines victory, and expects life-changing fulfillment.

She crosses the finish line.

Feels joy—for 15 seconds.

Then... emptiness.

Because the magic was never the finish line.

The magic was becoming the kind of person who could reach it:

- Waking at 4 a.m.
- Running when tired
- Pushing past pain
- Showing up consistently
- Becoming disciplined, mentally strong, resilient

NBV is the same.

Transformation happens not when you arrive—but while you are becoming.

There are no finish lines in inner growth.

Only new versions.

STORY 2—THE GARDENER

Growth Happens Underground First

A gardener plants seeds in dry soil.

For weeks—nothing.

But underneath, roots are forming.

Growth becomes visible only after it becomes stable.

NBV requires the same patience.

Most people quit because they don't see immediate results.

The inner work—reflection, discipline, habits, boundaries—is forming invisible roots.

When the roots are ready, the visible transformation follows.

STORY 3—THE CORPORATE EMPLOYEE

From Routine to Reinvention

A mid-level employee feels stuck in repetition.

One day he asks:

“What can I become next—right here?”

Everything shifts.

He begins learning, contributing, documenting wins, and coaching juniors.

In six months, he becomes someone opportunities chase.

NBV is not about changing your environment.

It’s about changing the version of you that shows up in it.

STORY 4—THE WOMAN

Balancing Expectations and Becoming Herself

A woman carrying endless roles finally asks:

“Where did I go in all of this?”

She creates a 15-minute daily space—My NBV Time.

She reads. Reflects. Breathes. Reconnects

Her identity transforms—quietly, powerfully.

NBV is not selfish.

NBV is self-preservation.

NBV helps women reclaim the space they deserve.

STORY 5—THE INNOVATOR

The Courage to Be Wrong

Innovators have one superpower:

They are willing to look foolish before they look brilliant.

Failure does not mean lack of success—it is experimentation.

NBV grows through attempts, drafts, mistakes, prototypes, and refinements.

Perfection blocks growth.

Experimentation fuels it.

EMBRACING IMPERFECTION—THE ARTIST WITHIN

The Art of Becoming, Not Arriving

A masterpiece is built through layers—not perfection.

You are the artist.

Your life is the canvas.

Your imperfections are the raw material.

NBV is the art of continuous layering—refining, correcting, exploring, and expanding.

WISDOM ACROSS CULTURES – NBV IS ANCIENT AND UNIVERSAL

NBV IS ANCIENT AND UNIVERSAL

Across cultures, faiths, and philosophies, the idea of continuous becoming has always existed.



Buddhism: Mindful becoming — the path of awareness, compassion, and inner transformation



Hinduism: *Nitya Nootana* — daily renewal and the evolution of the self



Japanese Philosophy: *Kaizen* — continuous improvement in small steps



African Wisdom: *"Little by little, the bird builds its nest"*



Stoicism: progress over perfection — becoming better each day through discipline and virtue



Sufism: polishing the heart — inner refinement through love, surrender and awareness



Islam: *Tazkiyah* — purification and gradual betterment of the self



Christianity: *Sanctification* — the lifelong journey of becoming more Christ-like in character, love, forgiveness, and purpose



Judaism: *Teshuvah* — returning to one's best self through reflection, correction, and renewed commitment



Taoism: living in alignment with the *Tao* — becoming more harmonious, balanced, and adaptable

Humanity has always understood one truth:

We are meant to evolve, not arrive.

NBV JOURNAL PRACTICE—THE BECOMING PAGE

Daily practice. Three lines:



I SEE: What am I observing today?



I FEEL: What emotion is present?



I DO: What ONE action will move me toward my NBV?

This page becomes your mirror, compass, progress tracker, and biography of growth.

THE ESSENCE OF CHAPTER 1

Across cultures, faiths, and philosophies,
the idea of continuous becoming has always existed.

NBV is not about leaps.

NBV is not about guarantees.

NBV is not about final forms.

NBV is about **becoming**.

About **moving**.

About **choosing**.

This chapter is the **ignition**.

The chapters ahead are the **roadmap**.

Your actions are the engine.

Your **Next Best Version** is waiting —



Today.

From where you stand.

As the next version of you.

CHAPTER 2:

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF YOUR NEXT BEST VERSION

“It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves.”

— Sir Edmund Hillary

Every journey of inner growth begins with a realization: the recognition that who you are today is not the limit of who you can become. Chapter 1 introduced the idea of NBV—Next Best Version—as a mindset of continuous becoming. Chapter 2 explores how to activate the power that moves you forward on this journey.

There is a point in every person’s life when they sense an inner shift. It may not feel dramatic. It may not come with clarity or confidence. But it begins with a subtle awareness that something within is ready to evolve. This is where empowerment begins—not in external achievements, but in the internal alignment that gives your life direction.

THE MOUNTAIN WITHIN — RECOGNIZING YOUR INNER LANDSCAPE

Every human being stands before a mountain.

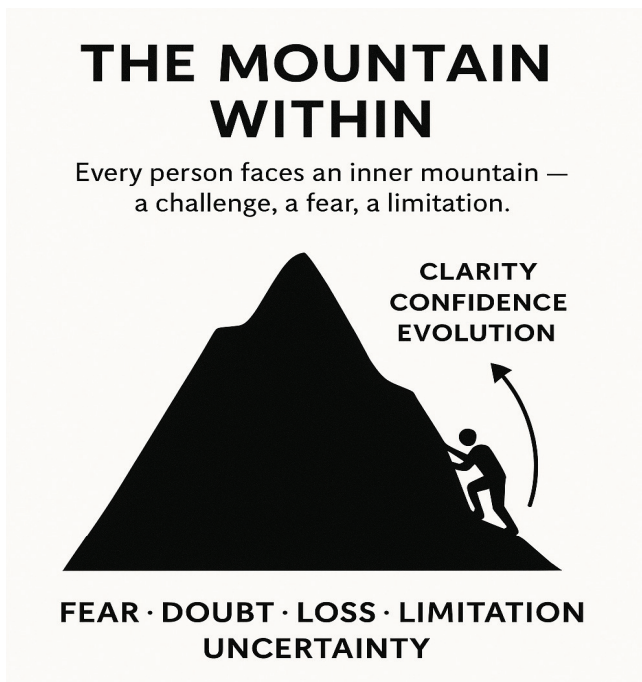
For some, it is fear.

For others, self-doubt, loss, or limitation.

And for most of us, that mountain isn’t outside—it’s within.

We live in a world obsessed with the outer climb: promotions, possessions, power, and applause. Yet the most meaningful ascent is an inner one—the journey from confusion to clarity, from comparison to confidence, from existence to evolution.

This is where your Next Best Version (NBV) begins to take shape. NBV is not a slogan or a self-help cliché; it is the living truth that the best within you is always unfinished—waiting to be rediscovered, refined, and released.



Your NBV is the space between who you were yesterday and who you can consciously become today.

It is the gentle reminder that every sunrise brings another chance to rise within.

“The only race that truly matters is the one between who you were yesterday and who you choose to be today.” — CPP

THE INNER COMPASS: WHERE POWER BEGINS

The world often teaches us to measure success by speed and size how fast we grow, how much we earn, and how high we rise.

But genuine power doesn't come from external acceleration; it comes from internal alignment.

When what you believe, what you value, and what you do begin to move in the same direction, you unlock something far greater than momentum—you unlock meaning.

NBV thinking shifts your focus from achievement to alignment, from competition to creation.

It reminds you that while you cannot control every circumstance, you can always control your choices, your energy, and your integrity.

That awareness is power.

Power is not the noise of dominance; it is the quiet of direction.

It is to know who you are, what you stand for, and what you are becoming.

THE AAA SEQUENCE — THE UNIVERSAL PATH OF UNLOCKING

Growth is subtle. It shows up in how you respond, how you think, and how you treat yourself and others. Behind every inner transformation lies a simple and universal process:

Awareness → Acceptance → Action

Awareness is the moment you recognize a pattern or barrier.

Acceptance is the willingness to acknowledge reality without resistance.

Action is the conscious step you take toward change.

Each phase works together:

- Awareness opens possibilities
- Acceptance reduces inner conflict
- Action creates progress

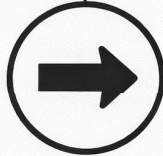
THE AAA SEQUENCE



AWARENESS



ACCEPTANCE



ACTION

“Power doesn’t appear when life becomes easy; it appears when you stop avoiding what makes you strong.” — CPP

The AAA sequence helps you shift from unconscious patterns to intentional growth. It keeps you connected to your inner truth and supports your NBV journey through every stage.

THE MYTH OF A COMMON STARTING LINE

Society often pretends that we all start from the same line—as if the world were a fair race measured by identical rules.

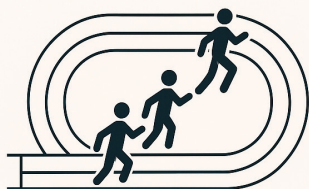
But life is not a 100-metre sprint; it is a unique terrain shaped by opportunity, upbringing, and unseen battles.

Some begin with abundance, others with adversity.

Some are gifted with mentors early; others must navigate in the dark.

Yet the beauty of NBV lies in its fairness—it asks you only to run your race, not the race.

THE MYTH OF A COMMON STARTING LINE



- Society often assumes identical starting positions
- Life is not a uniform race

NBV FOCUS: RUN YOUR RACE

- Acknowledge your true starting point
- Let go of comparison
- Embrace individual growth
- Progress becomes your crown

The Next Best Version philosophy dismantles comparison by honouring context.

It doesn't demand equal beginnings; it celebrates individual becoming.

When you focus on the inner race your pace, your growth, your integrity—the outer noise fades. Freedom appears. And you begin to live from purpose rather than pressure.

THE QUIET SHIFT: FROM COMPARISON TO PROGRESS

Comparison is a thief dressed as motivation.

It whispers that you're behind, even when you're growing.

It makes you doubt your rhythm, your worth, and your journey.

NBV offers a quieter, wiser lens:

“Am I a little wiser, kinder, and stronger than I was yesterday?”

That one question transforms everything.

Progress becomes the measure of success.

Courage replaces approval.

Consistency replaces applause.

You no longer chase milestones; you craft meaning.

Each small act of awareness becomes an act of becoming.

This is how transformation begins—not in giant leaps, but in mindful inches.

STORIES OF NBV IN ACTION — REAL-LIFE REFLECTIONS

The Athlete—Discipline as Becoming

Before the world cheers a champion, the athlete has already won a thousand unseen battles—rising at dawn, training in silence, and choosing persistence over comfort.

Her NBV lives not on the podium, but in the discipline she became along the way.

The Student—Hope as Becoming

A boy studies under the flicker of a kerosene lamp. Each night he learns one more concept, writes one more line.

He may never make headlines, but every effort expands his horizon. His NBV is not in grades, but in grit.

The Leader—Integrity as Becoming

A CEO turns down a deal that conflicts with her ethics.

She sacrifices profit for principle, and in doing so, becomes her stronger self.

Leadership is not about standing tallest; it is about standing true.

The Seeker—Presence as Becoming

A seeker sits in meditation. Some days the mind wanders; others, a single breath feels eternal.

That one conscious breath is victory.

Spiritual growth is not a race to enlightenment—it is the art of returning, again and again, to awareness.

THE FOUR FORCES OF PERSONAL POWER

To unlock your *Next Best Version*, nurture these four inner powers—the engines of transformation that live quietly within every person:

1. Clarity—the Power of Knowing

Know what truly matters. Clarity turns confusion into calm.

Ask: “What am I becoming?” not “What am I achieving?”

2. Consistency—the Power of Showing up

Greatness is not born in grand gestures; it is built in daily disciplines.

The smallest repeated action, when guided by purpose, becomes momentum.

3. Courage—the Power of Moving through Fear

Fear will never disappear; it simply shifts shape.

Courage is not the absence of fear but the decision to walk with it.

4. Compassion—the Power of Connection

Growth without kindness becomes ambition without soul.

Compassion reminds you that becoming your best self is also about uplifting others.

Together, these four forces form the foundation of NBV—the architecture of authentic power.

THE POWER WITHIN: FINDING YOUR UNIQUE KEY

Every person carries a reservoir of power inside them—a quiet force waiting to be remembered.

It doesn't always roar; sometimes it whispers beneath uncertainty, pain, or years of living on autopilot.

This power is your inner potential—the raw energy of possibility that shapes every step of your NBV journey.

Yet unlocking it is rarely easy.

The keys are never identical, because the locks are never the same.

For one person, the key may be courage—daring to take the first step despite fear.

For another, it may be forgiveness—releasing the weight of the past to move freely forward.

For some, it's faith—believing they are worthy of more even before the world believes in them.

And for many, it's awareness—simply realizing that the power they seek has always been theirs.

The process of unlocking this inner potential is deeply personal.

It demands patience, honesty, and compassion.

It invites you to look beyond what you do and rediscover who you are.

Every person's unlocking looks different, yet the essence is the same: you are not finding power; you are returning to it.

And in that return, you rediscover your most authentic self—the one that existed before fear, before expectation, before comparison.

That is the true beginning of your *Next Best Version*.

The truth is simple yet transformative:

You were never powerless—only unaware of how powerful you truly are.

When you begin to recognize the hidden strengths within—your resilience, creativity, empathy, and persistence—the mountain before you begins to shrink.

The climb remains, but now you carry the key within you.

NBV isn't about adding something new; it's about awakening what already exists.

Your journey is not about finding power elsewhere—it's about finding your unique key and daring to turn it.

“The greatest unlocking happens not when you find a new door, but when you finally turn the key you’ve always held within” — CPP

NBV AS A MINDSET

NBV is not a project with deadlines; it's a lifelong rhythm of reflection and renewal.

It invites you to:

- Honour your uniqueness—there is no universal yardstick for worth.
- Celebrate progress over perfection—evolution is messy and magnificent.
- Turn failures into feedback—every stumble carries instruction.
- Align actions with values—integrity is growth made visible.

When you start thinking the NBV way, failure loses its sting, success gains its soul, and life becomes less about arrival and more about becoming.

In the next chapter, we will explore the first key that unlocks this transformation—self-awareness, the mirror that reveals your truth and guides every step of your journey.

THE 3-MINUTE NBV RITUAL

Transformation doesn't require grand beginnings—only consistent intention.

This three-minute ritual reconnects you to your growth every day.

Step 1 — Reflect (1 minute)

Ask: “What did I learn or improve on today?”

Gratitude grounds progress.

Step 2 — Reframe (1 minute)

Ask: “What challenged me today, and what can it teach me?”

Challenges become teachers when met with curiosity.

Step 3 — Recommit (1 minute)

Affirm: “Tomorrow, I will show up as my *Next Best Version*—one choice at a time.”

Intention repeated becomes identity.

Morning practice fuels direction.

Night practice fuels peace.

Either way, consistency becomes transformation.

CLOSING THOUGHT

“Don't compare your life with others. There's no comparison between the sun and the moon. They shine when it's their time.” — Anonymous

Becoming your *Next Best Version* is not about outshining others—it's about illuminating your own path.

It's about discovering strength where there was doubt, wisdom where there was confusion, and compassion where there was judgment.

Every day offers a new chance to begin again—not to change who you are, but to reveal more of who you already are.

“Your greatest victory is not over others, but over your own old fears, habits, and limitations.” — CPP

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Power begins with alignment, not achievement.
2. Your NBV is a daily evolution, not a final version.
3. Comparison fades when purpose grows.
4. The four forces—clarity, consistency, courage, and compassion—unlock inner mastery.
5. Small, steady actions create lasting transformation.

Unlocking your power is only the beginning. Awareness gives it direction and depth. In the next chapter, we’ll discover how self-awareness becomes the foundation of your growth, and we’ll explore the foundation of unlocking your power—the mirror through which true transformation begins.

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CHAPTER 3:

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-AWARENESS IN ACHIEVING NBV

“Self-awareness is the ability to take an honest look at your life without any attachment to it being right or wrong, good or bad.” —
Debbie Ford

Have you ever felt like you’re moving fast, yet unsure whether you’re moving in the right direction?

That’s what happens when we chase progress without pausing for awareness.

Self-awareness is that pause—the quiet mirror that reflects not only where we are, but also who we are becoming.

It is the foundation on which every version of you is built. Without it, even success can feel hollow. With it, growth becomes intentional, grounded, and fulfilling.

WHY SELF-AWARENESS MATTERS FOR NBV

Your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not a random upgrade—it’s a conscious evolution of who you are today into who you can become tomorrow.

And the bridge between those two versions is self-awareness.

Self-awareness gives you the ability to step outside your automatic patterns and see yourself clearly—your strengths, limitations, emotions, triggers, and aspirations. It transforms your life from reactive existence to purposeful creation.

When you become aware, you stop living on autopilot. You begin to ask deeper questions:

- Am I living according to my values or someone else's expectations?
- Are my goals truly mine, or borrowed from what society celebrates?
- What inner patterns keep repeating, and what are they trying to teach me?

These reflections form the NBV mindset—a mindset that thrives on reflection, recalibration, and renewal.

“Awareness is the mirror that shows you not just who you are, but who you’re becoming.” — CPP

SELF-AWARENESS AND THE NBV CYCLE

Every NBV journey follows a natural rhythm:

Awareness → Acceptance → Action → Advancement.

- **Awareness** allows you to see what it is.
- **Acceptance** helps you own it without denial or judgment.
- **Action** empowers you to change what must evolve.
- **Advancement** leads you to your *Next Best Version*.

Without awareness, this cycle breaks. You can't act effectively on what you don't see, nor can you transform what you haven't acknowledged.

That's why every NBV transformation begins with this question:

“What truth about myself am I ready to face today?”

THE SELF-AWARENESS FRAMEWORK

To grow self-awareness, you must first understand the different dimensions of knowing yourself.

The Self-Awareness Framework—inspired by the Johari Window and adapted to NBV—maps the relationship between what you and others perceive about you.

Quadrant 1: Known to Self and Others—The Open Zone

This is the realm of your authentic self—the traits, strengths, and values you express openly and others can see too.

When this zone expands, you operate from authenticity and trust, both personally and professionally.

NBV Insight: Growth happens faster when who you are privately and who you are publicly begin to align.

Quadrant 2: Known to Self but Not Others—The Hidden Zone

This area contains your inner world—your private thoughts, insecurities, dreams, and fears that you rarely reveal.

By selectively opening up to others, you invite genuine connection and collaboration. Vulnerability becomes a strength that builds trust.

NBV Insight: Your next version often hides in what you are afraid to share.

Quadrant 3: Not Known to Self but Known to Others—The Blind Zone

These are your blind spots—behavioural, habits, or patterns others notice but you don't.

Feedback becomes your mirror here. When you receive it with humility rather than defensiveness, your awareness—and therefore your NBV potential—multiplies.

NBV Insight: Every piece of honest feedback is a gift — a window into your unrealized potential.

Quadrant 4: Not Known to Self or Others—The Unknown Zone

This zone represents your hidden possibilities—your untapped potential, unexplored creativity, and dormant strengths.

You discover them when you step outside your comfort zone, take new risks, and embrace learning.

NBV Insight: Your greatest growth lies in the parts of you yet to be discovered.



SELF-AWARENESS IN ACTION: HOW IT FUELS NBV

Let’s connect this deeper:

- Awareness shapes direction. Without it, you might climb a ladder leaning against the wrong wall.

- Awareness reveals patterns. You begin to see recurring emotions, reactions, and choices—many of which are habits, not truths.
- Awareness builds resilience. When you understand your triggers, you recover faster from setbacks.
- Awareness drives authenticity. You stop trying to be perfect and start being real.

The more aware you become, the clearer your NBV path gets—because clarity breeds choice, and choice breeds change.

PRACTICES FOR CULTIVATING SELF-AWARENESS

Awareness doesn't arise by accident—it's practiced daily. Here are key strategies:

1. Mindfulness & Meditation:

Take a few minutes daily to notice your thoughts and emotions without labelling them good or bad. Over time, this practice creates space between your thoughts and your identity—a hallmark of NBV living.

2. Journaling:

Write down what you feel, learn, and notice each day. Patterns emerge—triggers, joys, and decisions that shaped your day. Journaling is a conversation between your current self and your next best self.

3. Feedback Seeking:

Growth accelerates when you ask others to hold a mirror to your blind spots. Try this:

"What's one thing I do well, and one thing I could improve?"

Then, listen—not to defend, but to discover.

4. Weekly Reflection Ritual:

Dedicate 30 minutes weekly to reflect:

- What energized me?
- What drained me?
- What did I learn about myself this week?

This ritual aligns actions with intentions—your personal recalibration zone.

5. Breath Awareness:

When stress takes over, return to your breath. The present moment is the meeting point between your current version and your *Next Best Version*.

FROM AWARENESS TO TRANSFORMATION

Self-awareness alone doesn't create transformation—applied awareness does.

Awareness must translate into conscious choices, new habits, and courageous actions.

For instance, awareness may show you a tendency to avoid conflict; your NBV action might be to start having honest conversations.

Awareness may reveal self-criticism; your NBV growth could involve self-compassion and forgiveness.

Awareness is the light; action is the pathway.

Together, they lead to your *Next Best Version*.

PRACTICES FOR CULTIVATING SELF-AWARENESS

Awareness is not automatic—it's practiced. Here are strategies that consistently help:

- **Mindfulness & Meditation:** A daily pause to notice thoughts and emotions without judgment.
- **Journaling:** A written record of inner patterns, triggers, and small wins.

- **Feedback Seeking:** Ask 2–3 trusted people, “What is the one thing that I do well, and one thing I should improve?”
- **Self-Reflection Rituals:** A weekly 30-minute check-in—What energized me? What drained me? What did I learn?
- **Breathing Techniques:** A way to bring awareness back to the present moment.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

I was born and raised in Ooty—a small hill town surrounded by mist, pine trees, and endless simplicity. Life there was modest, but it was also rich with lessons that no classroom could ever teach. My parents may not have had much in material terms, but they gave me something far more valuable—the values of hard work, resilience, integrity, and compassion.

Those lessons became my foundation. Yet, when I stepped into the corporate world, I realized that hard work alone was not enough. I was running fast but wasn’t sure if I was running in the right direction. There were moments when I felt stuck—caught between ambition and uncertainty. I was achieving, but not aligning. I was progressing, but not fulfilling.

It was during one of those phases that I decided to pause—not because I wanted to, but because I needed to. I began to ask myself questions I had long avoided: What am I really seeking? What makes me feel alive? What are my true strengths—and what’s holding me back?

Those questions marked the turning point of my life—the beginning of my journey into self-awareness.

At first, it wasn’t easy. I had spent years focusing on external success, but now I had to turn inward—to look at myself with honesty and without judgment. I began to explore simple practices that gradually became life-changing.

I started reflecting—every night, I would think about my day: what I did well, what I could have done better, and what emotions had driven my actions. These reflections became my compass.

Then came introspection—diving deeper into my beliefs and motivations. I started noticing patterns: moments when I reacted out of fear, times when ego guided my choices, and situations that revealed my true values.

Journaling became another powerful tool. Writing my thoughts gave them structure. My doubts, dreams, and realizations slowly took shape on paper. It became a dialogue between my current self and the version I aspired to become.

Through breathing techniques and meditation, I learned to slow down. Each breath reminded me that awareness begins in stillness. Meditation helped me separate my thoughts from my identity—to observe rather than be overwhelmed.

Little by little, these practices didn't just change my mindset; they changed my life.

As I continued this journey, I began to see myself—truly see myself. I discovered my blind spots, biases, and emotional triggers. I realized that my strength lay not in avoiding weaknesses, but in acknowledging them.

At work, especially during my years at Biocon and other organizations, I began applying this new awareness. I realized that technical skills and knowledge matter, but what defines real leadership is values—quality, compliance, ethics, and integrity. These principles became the compass for my decisions. Even when it was hard, I chose what was right over what was easy.

And something remarkable happened—the more I grew in self-awareness, the more I became empathetic. I began to understand people better—their struggles, motivations, and perspectives. Relationships improved. My confidence grew. I felt a quiet strength

within me—one rooted not in external achievements, but in inner alignment.

One experience that touched me deeply came through a Rotary International program. We spent time with individuals who had special needs and with visually impaired students. Watching them express such extraordinary talent and joy, despite physical limitations, shook something inside me.

Here were people who couldn't see with their eyes, yet they saw life more clearly than most of us. Their resilience, humour, and gratitude humbled me. I realized how often we are blind—not because we lack sight, but because we lack awareness. That experience taught me that self-awareness is not just about knowing yourself, but also about seeing others—truly seeing them.

Over time, I understood that self-awareness is not a one-time realization, it's a lifelong practice. It's a mirror that never stops reflecting new dimensions of who you are.

I began investing in myself—seeking mentors, enrolling in leadership and management programs at IIM Bangalore, Duke, and later pursuing my Ph.D. at the Swiss School of Business Management. Each step wasn't just academic - it was personal evolution. I was no longer chasing titles; I was chasing transformation.

This journey also taught me balance. There were times when I was consumed by ambition, but self-awareness brought me back to what truly matters—family, health, relationships, and peace of mind. The more I grew inwardly, the more life made sense outwardly.

Today, when I look back, I see not a straight line but a winding path filled with lessons, stumbles, and awakenings. Every experience success or failure—became a mirror reflecting who I was and who I could become.

Self-awareness gave me the clarity to align my values with my actions, my intentions with my choices, and my dreams with my

purpose. It taught me that transformation doesn't begin with changing the world—it begins with changing yourself.

“Transformation begins the moment you choose to see yourself clearly—without defense, without denial.” — CPP

LEARNING FROM PEOPLE AND LEADERS AROUND ME

If there's one truth I've discovered along my journey, it's that we don't grow alone.

Self-awareness may begin with introspection, but it deepens through connection through the people and leaders who cross our paths and shape who we become. Every person we meet reflects a part of us, teaching lessons that no book or course ever could.

Throughout my life, the people and leaders around me have been the living examples of the *Next Best Version* (NBV) philosophy. They showed me that growth isn't a solo pursuit—it's a shared experience, woven through relationships, feedback, and everyday encounters.

I still remember one of my earliest colleagues—a quiet, unassuming individual who rarely spoke in meetings. While many rushed to voice their opinions, he listened—deeply, patiently, and without judgment. When he finally spoke, his words carried wisdom and clarity. Observing him, I realized that leadership is not always about being the loudest voice in the room; sometimes it's about being the calmest presence. He taught me that true influence begins with listening, not speaking.

Another turning point came from a friend who had the courage to give me uncomfortable feedback. He told me, “You move fast, Chella, sometimes so fast that you miss the details that matter.” It was difficult to accept at first, but it became one of the most valuable lessons of my life. That moment taught me that true friendship is not about comfort—it's about honesty. His words became a mirror that

reflected what I needed to work on. Through that mirror, I saw my *Next Best Version* waiting on the other side of humility.

Then came one of the most profound experiences of my life—working with visually impaired students during a Rotary International program. Watching them sing, create art, and perform with such passion moved me deeply. They couldn't see the world with their eyes, but they saw life with their hearts. Their joy and confidence shattered my definition of "limitation." They taught me that awareness is not about what you can see—it's about how you choose to perceive. I left that experience feeling humbled, realizing that sometimes those who seem limited are, in fact, limitless.

My corporate journey further deepened these lessons. At Biocon and other organizations, I had the privilege of working under leaders who inspired by example. They didn't lead with fear or authority, but with integrity, purpose, and compassion. They taught me that ethics and excellence are not separate pursuits—they are inseparable partners. Their commitment to doing what's right, even when no one was watching, left a lasting impression on me.

One of my mentors once said something that I will never forget:

"The higher you rise, the more you must bend—because humility is what keeps growth sustainable."

That simple truth became a guiding principle in my NBV journey. It reminded me that awareness without humility leads to arrogance, and success without reflection leads to emptiness.

As I grew, I realized something profound—the people who inspired me the most were not perfect; they were aware. They knew their strengths, admitted their flaws, and kept evolving. They embodied the essence of the *Next Best Version*—not chasing perfection, but choosing progress every single day.

Over the years, I've come to see that every person who enters our life plays a role in our growth. Some teach us what to do. Others show us what not to do. Some inspire us, and others challenge us to rise

higher. Whether pleasant or painful, every encounter is a teacher in disguise.

Today, I approach every interaction as an opportunity for reflection. When I admire someone's strength, I ask myself what I can learn from it. When I'm triggered by someone's behaviour, I pause to ask what it reveals about me. I've realized that people are not interruptions in our path—they are the path.

As I continue my journey, I remain grateful to every person and leader who has shaped me—not through grand gestures, but through their presence, their honesty, and their authenticity. They reminded me that becoming your *Next Best Version* is not a destination you reach alone—it's a shared journey of learning, reflection, and growth.

"We meet people for a reason—some awaken us, some challenge us, some heal us, and some remind us who we are meant to become." - CPP

CULTURAL & RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Across time, traditions, and disciplines, one truth stands tall: self-awareness is the foundation of transformation. Whether viewed through the lens of spirituality or science, it remains the universal lever for human growth - the starting point for becoming your *Next Best Version* (NBV).

FROM ANCIENT WISDOM TO MODERN SCIENCE

In Indian philosophy, self-awareness has always been at the heart of inner growth. The practice of *Atma Vichara* self-inquiry - as taught by sages and spiritual masters, emphasizes the power of asking "Who am I?" not as a question of identity, but as a path to awakening. It teaches that clarity of the self brings clarity to life.

This ancient pursuit of self-realization beautifully aligns with what modern leadership science now validates. A Harvard Business

Review study (2018) found that leaders with higher levels of self-awareness consistently outperformed their peers in effectiveness, communication, and team trust. The ability to understand one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors—and how they affect others—directly influences leadership success.

Similarly, psychological research across the past two decades highlights that mindfulness and journaling—practices rooted in observation and reflection—enhance emotional regulation, empathy, and cognitive flexibility. They train the mind to pause, reflect, and respond rather than react.

From ancient temples to modern boardrooms, the message remains the same: awareness transforms.

Spirituality calls it awakening.

Science calls it emotional intelligence.

At the core of both lies the same essence—knowing yourself to grow yourself.

“When science and spirituality converge, transformation is no longer mystical—it becomes measurable.”—CPP

THE BENEFITS OF SELF-AWARENESS

Self-awareness doesn't just change how you think—it changes how you live. When you begin to understand yourself deeply, every aspect of life begins to shift. The benefits ripple across your personal, emotional, and professional worlds, helping you evolve into your *Next Best Version* (NBV) every single day.

Improved Relationships

When you're aware of your emotions, triggers, and patterns, you listen more and react less. You begin to understand others from a place of empathy rather than assumption. Conversations become clearer, conflicts become constructive, and connections become authentic.

Increased Confidence

Self-awareness helps you see your strengths as they are—not inflated, not diminished. You begin to own your abilities with humility and self-belief. Confidence stops being about proving your worth to others and becomes about expressing your truth.

Better Decisions

With awareness comes clarity. You start to recognize your biases and question your impulses. Decisions shift from reactive to reflective, from hurried to intentional. You begin to align choices with your values, not your fears.

Greater Resilience

Awareness doesn't eliminate challenges—it strengthens your ability to face them. You learn to notice your stress triggers, regulate your emotions, and adapt with perspective. Instead of breaking under pressure, you bend, breathe, and bounce back stronger.

Self-awareness, therefore, is not a luxury—it's a life skill. It makes you a better leader, a better partner, a better parent, and, most importantly, a better you.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Self-awareness is the foundation of your next best version

Every transformation begins with seeing yourself clearly. Awareness is not the destination — it is the doorway to lasting growth.

2. Developing self-awareness is a lifelong practice

It takes patience, honesty, and courage to look within. Through reflection, feedback, mindfulness, and observation, awareness deepens with time and experience.

3. Awareness turns confusion into clarity and reaction into choice

When you understand your emotions, values, and patterns, you begin to make conscious decisions instead of automatic ones. You respond with purpose, not impulse.

4. Self-awareness builds emotional intelligence and authentic confidence

Knowing your strengths helps you lead with assurance. Understanding your weaknesses helps you grow with humility. Together, they create balance and maturity.

5. The ripple effect of awareness transforms every part of life

From relationships to leadership, from decision-making to resilience, awareness enhances everything it touches.

Self-awareness gives us the map; courage gives us the feet to walk—in the next chapter, we will learn how to transform insight into brave action.

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CHAPTER 4:

UNDERSTANDING YOUR VALUES AND PASSIONS

"Your values are the GPS of your life. They help you navigate through the ups and downs and keep you on track." – Unknown

"Power without awareness can scatter. Awareness gathers your energy and gives it purpose." – Have you ever felt like you were just moving through life without really knowing why—as though each day blurred into the next? I've certainly felt that way. What changed everything for me was realizing that clarity doesn't come from the outside world, but from within—from our values and passions.

When we understand what truly matters to us, we begin to live with purpose, energy, and meaning.

THE POWER OF VALUES

Values are more than abstract ideals; they are the inner compass that directs our choices, behaviors, and relationships. They define what we stand for, what we cannot compromise on, and what gives us a deep sense of authenticity.

When we act in line with our values, we feel whole and true to ourselves. When we don't, we often feel restless, conflicted, or even lost.

Living in harmony with our values creates a powerful ripple effect. It brings authenticity—a sense that who we are privately and publicly is aligned. It sharpens our decision-making, helping us choose paths that serve our principles rather than distract from them. And it shapes our relationships, drawing us closer to people who share or respect those same guiding principles.

“Your values are your compass; your passions are your wings. Together, they keep you true and take you far.” — CPP

WHY PASSIONS MATTER

Passions are the sparks that light us up from within. They are not just hobbies or pastimes, but pursuits that make us feel alive, energized, and fully present. They are the activities that don’t just fill our time—they expand it.

Passions matter because they give our lives colour and direction. They fuel creativity, resilience, and perseverance. When we tap into what we are passionate about, we discover energy reserves we didn’t know we had.

A task that might seem exhausting when done out of obligation feels almost effortless when driven by passion.

More importantly, passions are deeply personal signposts guiding us toward our *Next Best Version* (NBV). They show us what we enjoy, what we’re willing to invest in, what risks we’ll take, and what sacrifices we’ll make. Passion turns effort into joy and struggle into growth.

Living without passion often feels like drifting—moving from one task to another without purpose. But living with passion makes us intentional, driven, and connected to something greater than ourselves.

When passions align with values, they become a force for transformation—they fuel both purpose and performance.

When you pursue your passions:

- You feel more engaged and motivated.
- You develop a sense of purpose and direction.
- You enhance your mental and emotional well-being.

“Passion helps you move forward, but values ensure you move in the right direction.” — CPP

PRACTICING VALUES AND PASSIONS AWARENESS

Developing awareness of your values and passions requires practice, patience, and persistence. Here are some ways to cultivate it:

- **Reflect on your values and passions.**
Take time to journal, meditate, or speak with someone you trust about what matters most to you.
- **Explore new experiences.**
Try new hobbies, attend workshops, or learn new skills. Sometimes, passion reveals itself through curiosity.
- **Seek feedback from others.**
Ask trusted friends, family, or colleagues how they perceive your strengths and what they think drives you.
- **Practice mindfulness and self-reflection.**
Regularly pause to notice what energizes you and what drains you. These moments offer clues to your true passions and values.

Zone	Description	Outcome	NBV Insight
1. Drifting Zone (Low Values, Low Passion)	You feel lost or disengaged, often doing things out of routine or obligation.	Lack of direction, burnout risk.	Pause. Reflect. Redefine what truly matters.
2. Conflict Zone (High Passion, Low Values)	You enjoy what you do, but it clashes with	Internal tension, guilt, or confusion.	Realign passion with purpose to

	your principles or ethics.		restore integrity.
3. Comfort Zone (High Values, Low Passion)	You live by your principles, but life feels monotonous or uninspired.	Stability without excitement.	Inject curiosity—rediscover what energizes you.
4. Alignment Zone (The NBV Zone) (High Values, High Passion)	You live and act with both integrity and enthusiasm. Your work and life reflect your inner truth.	Clarity, fulfilment, sustainable growth, and authentic success.	Protect this alignment. Continuously evolve so your passion and values grow together.

“Your values define your foundation, and your passions fuel your journey. Together, they create the bridge to your Next Best Version.”

– CPP

PRACTICING VALUES AND PASSIONS AWARENESS

Developing values and passions awareness requires practice, patience, and persistence. Here are some strategies to help you cultivate values and passions awareness:

- **Reflect on your values and passions:** Take time to journal, meditate, or talk to a friend about what matters most to you.
- **Explore new experiences:** Try new hobbies, attend workshops or seminars, and explore new interests to discover your passions.
- **Seek feedback from others:** Ask trusted friends, family, or colleagues for their insights on your values and passions.
- **Practice mindfulness and self-reflection:** Regularly take time to reflect on your thoughts, feelings, and experiences to gain a deeper understanding of your values and passions.

THE BENEFITS OF KNOWING YOUR VALUES AND PASSIONS

Understanding your values and passions can truly change your life. When you become aware of what matters the most to you and what excites you from within, everything starts to fall into place—your choices, your relationships, and your goals.

Here are some of the most powerful benefits of becoming aware of your values and passions:

- **You find more purpose and direction.**

You begin to understand what truly matters to you and where you want your life to go. This clarity helps you make better decisions and gives your life a strong sense of meaning.

- **You build better and deeper relationships.**

When you live by your values, you naturally attract people who share or respect them. This leads to relationships that are more genuine, trusting, and supportive.

- **You feel more motivated and inspired.**

When you do what you love and believe in, work stops feeling like a burden. You wake up with energy and enthusiasm because your actions reflect your true self.

- **You experience more happiness and fulfillment.**

Living with values and following your passions brings peace and satisfaction. You start to feel that your life has meaning—not because of what you achieve, but because of who you are becoming.

“When you live by your values and follow your passions, you stop chasing happiness — you start creating it.” — CPP

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

I've been blessed to grow up with parents who taught me values that shaped my entire life.

From my mother, I learned the importance of honesty and kindness. She never lied or cheated anyone and always went out of her way to help others. Watching her, I learned that real strength lies in doing the right thing and supporting people when they need it the most.

My father taught me the value of simplicity, humility, and respect. He believed that we should never take shortcuts, be greedy, and take what isn't ours. From him, I learned that true strength doesn't shout—it speaks softly through integrity and self-respect.

Together, my parents showed me that values are not just words—they are a way of living. They became the foundation of who I am today.

These lessons taught me to be kind, compassionate, and understanding. In my personal and professional life, I've always tried to put others first and to help people in whatever way I can. Even in difficult times, these values guided me like a compass, showing me the right path.

It was during one of those difficult times that I found my passion. I discovered that speaking—expressing my thoughts and feelings—helped me heal, reflect, and grow. Public speaking became more than just a skill; it became my way to connect with people and to make a difference.

But my journey wasn't easy. I studied in a Tamil-medium school, and for a long time, I struggled to speak English confidently. I knew communication was important, so I worked hard every single day. I listened, practiced, and learned from every conversation. Slowly, I improved—one step at a time.

One day, I stood on a TEDx stage, sharing my story with the world. That moment was not just about speaking in English—it was about

breaking my fears and proving that determination can turn any weakness into strength.

Public speaking gave me much more than words—it gave me purpose. It connected me with wonderful people, helped me build meaningful relationships, and reminded me that when passion comes from the heart, it can truly inspire others.

Over time, I realized something very important: values and passions change and grow with us. What matters is taking time to ask ourselves: What do I truly care about? What makes me feel alive?

When we find the answers, life starts to make sense. When our values and passions align, everything becomes clear—our goals, our purpose, and our direction.

Today, I try to live my values and passions every single day. They are not separate things—they are a part of who I am. They guide my decisions, give me energy, and help me live a life that feels true to myself.

I’ve learned that passion helps you move forward, but values make sure you move in the right direction. Together, they are the best companions on the journey to becoming your *Next Best Version* (NBV).

“Passion gives you the fire to move forward, but values give you the light to walk the right path. Together, they shape the true essence of your Next Best Version.” — CPP

LEARNING FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Over the years, I’ve realized that some of the most meaningful lessons in life don’t come from books or classrooms; they come from observing people. Every person we meet teaches us something. Some show us how to lead, some show us how to listen, and others show us what to avoid. Every interaction leaves behind a small piece of wisdom that shapes who we become.

From leaders, I've learned the value of resilience and clarity of vision. True leaders don't let challenges shake their purpose. They remain calm in the storm and steady in uncertainty. Their example reminds us that leadership is not about titles or authority—it's about responsibility. It's about standing for something greater than yourself and creating space where others can grow.

One of the most powerful lessons I've learned from great leaders is the quiet strength of humility. The most inspiring people are not always the loudest or most visible; they are the ones who listen before they speak, who recognize others' efforts, and who lead with integrity. Humility is not weakness—it is the strength to keep your ego aside for a higher purpose.

From peers, colleagues, and everyday people, the lessons are just as valuable. Simple acts of kindness—listening without judgment, offering help without expecting anything in return, or including someone who feels left out—show the power of empathy and connection. These gestures remind me that real success is not measured only by what we achieve, but by how we treat people along the way.

I've also learned from observing mistakes and failures—both my own and others'. Arrogance can isolate people. When ego takes over, collaboration breaks down. When fairness is missing, or others' contributions go unrecognized, trust quickly fades. These moments remind me that integrity, respect, and fairness are not optional values—they are essential. Without them, even the greatest talent loses its meaning.

All these experiences have taught me something important: growth is never a solo journey. Every leader, mentor, friend, and even critic we meet becomes a mirror—showing us either what we want to become or what we should avoid becoming.

Our values and passions are often strengthened and refined through these reflections. The world around us continuously shapes our

journey toward our Next Best Version (NBV)—if only we stay open, humble, and willing to learn.

“Every person you meet is a teacher. Some inspire your dreams, others test your values—but each one helps you grow into your Next Best Version.” — CPP

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Your values and passions are the foundation of your Next Best Version (NBV).
2. Living in alignment with your values and passions leads to purpose, fulfillment, and happiness.
3. Developing awareness of your values and passions requires practice, patience, and persistence.
4. Pursuing your passions and living in alignment with your values can improve your mental and emotional well-being.

When values light your path and passion fuels your step, the next task is to translate that energy into clear goals—in the next chapter we set purposeful, practical aims.

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CHAPTER 5:

SETTING GOALS FOR YOUR NBV JOURNEY

“Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible.”

—Tony Robbins

Have you ever felt like you’re moving through life without really knowing where you’re headed? You’re busy, doing many things, yet at the end of the day, you wonder if all that effort is truly taking you closer to the person you want to become.

I’ve been there too—restless, uncertain, and even anxious at times.

That was before I understood the deeper connection between goal-setting and the idea of our *Next Best Version* (NBV). NBV is not some faraway destination where everything suddenly falls into place. It is a living journey of becoming—of making small, conscious steps toward a truer, stronger, more fulfilled self. But here’s the truth: without clarity on where we’re going, even the most sincere desire for growth remains just that—a desire.

This is where goal-setting becomes powerful. Goals are not just tasks on a checklist; they are pathways that translate awareness into action.

Self-awareness tells us who we are today.

Values and passions reveal what matters most.

Goals bridge the two—they help us move, stretch, and transform.

Goals make the abstract idea of NBV real and tangible. They give us direction when the road feels uncertain, energy when motivation wavers, and evidence of progress when change feels slow.

When I began setting goals aligned with my values and passions, I noticed a shift. Life no longer felt like a series of random events—I was building something, step by step. Every small milestone and every challenge overcome became proof that I was evolving toward my *Next Best Version*.

That's the magic of goal-setting: it turns the invisible into the visible, the impossible into the possible, and transforms the NBV from a dream into a lived reality.

"A goal is not a finish line—it's a conversation between your purpose and your potential." — CPP

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOAL-SETTING IN ACHIEVING NBV

Goal-setting is essential for achieving NBV because it:

- **Provides clarity and direction:** Goals clarify what you want and outline the path to get there.
- **Boosts motivation and focus:** Goals energize you to act and help you stay aligned with what truly matters.
- **Enhances accountability and responsibility:** They help you take ownership of your actions and outcomes.
- **Fosters resilience and perseverance:** Clear goals build the mental strength to overcome challenges and stay committed to your NBV journey.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SETTING EFFECTIVE GOALS

"Goals are the road maps that guide us to our destinations."

– Zig Ziglar

Setting effective goals requires reflection, clarity, and consistency. Follow these steps to set goals that align with your NBV journey:

- **Reflect on your values and passions:** Begin by exploring what truly matters to you. What brings you joy? What drives you?
- **Identify your desired outcomes:** Define what success looks like in your NBV journey.
- **Make your goals SMART:** Ensure your goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.
- **Break down big goals into smaller ones:** Large goals can feel overwhelming. Divide them into smaller, achievable milestones.
- **Create an action plan:** Map out the steps and resources you'll need to reach your goals.
- **Track your progress and adjust:** Regularly review your progress and be open to adjusting your goals as you grow.

COMMON GOAL-SETTING MISTAKES TO AVOID

"Don't watch the clock; do what it does. Keep going." – Sam Levenson

As you set goals for your NBV journey, watch out for these common pitfalls:

- **Setting unrealistic goals:** Ensure your goals are challenging yet achievable.
- **Focusing on negative goals:** Frame goals around what you want to achieve, not what you want to avoid.
- **Lack of accountability and support:** Share your goals with a mentor, friend, or coach who can hold you accountable.
- **Failing to review and revise:** Revisit your goals regularly; growth requires flexibility.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND STAYING MOTIVATED

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” – Winston Churchill

Goal-setting is not a one-time event—it’s an ongoing process. Along the way, you’ll encounter obstacles, setbacks, and moments of doubt. Here’s how to stay on course:

- **Celebrate your progress:** Every small win counts. Celebrate milestones to stay encouraged.
- **Seek support and accountability:** Surround yourself with people who uplift and challenge you.
- **Stay flexible and adaptable:** If life shifts, let your plans evolve — not your purpose.
- **Focus on the journey, not just the destination:** Growth happens in the process, not just at the finish line.

STEPS FOR EFFECTIVE GOAL SETTING

Step	Focus Area	Key Actions
1. Reflect	Values & Passions	Identify what truly matters and inspires you.
2. Desired Outcome	Vision	Define what you want to achieve in your NBV journey.
3. SMART Goals	Structure	Make goals Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.
4. Breakdown Goals	Manageability	Divide larger goals into smaller milestones.
5. Action Plan	Strategy	Plan concrete steps, timelines, and resources.
6. Track Progress	Reflection	Review, refine, and celebrate your growth.

Setting goals is not about control—it's about clarity and commitment. It's the bridge between who you are and who you are becoming. When your goals align with your values, passions, and purpose, they become more than achievements—they become expressions of your evolving self.

“A goal without alignment is just a wish. But a goal rooted in purpose becomes a pathway to your Next Best Version.” — CPP

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

I still remember the day I set my first goal for my *Next Best Version* (NBV) journey.

At that time, life felt uncertain. I was working hard, yet I couldn't see where I was heading. I wanted to grow and find purpose, but I didn't know where to begin. There were days filled with doubt, frustration, and moments when I wondered if I was capable of more.

Then one day, I decided to take the first step—however small. I told myself, *“I may not see the whole path, but I can take one step forward.”*

That simple decision became a turning point. As I started setting goals and working toward them, I began to notice a shift. Things that once felt overwhelming slowly started to make sense. I was no longer just going through the motions—I was moving with purpose.

Over time, I realized that setting goals is not just about achieving something; it's about discovering who you are in the process. Each goal gave me clarity, confidence, and courage. Each challenge taught me something new about myself.

As I look back now, I see how certain personal goals became milestones in my growth:

- Improving my communication so I could connect more deeply with people

- Developing public speaking skills to share my thoughts with confidence
- Writing regularly to express myself and reflect
- Taking care of my health and well-being,
- Learning new skills to stay curious and relevant
- Stepping out of my comfort zone whenever fear tried to hold me back

These goals may seem simple, but each one carried meaning. They pushed me gently out of my comfort zone and guided me toward a more confident, grounded, and fulfilled version of myself.

One of the biggest lessons I learned along the way was the importance of celebrating progress.

Earlier, I was so focused on the destination that I forgot to enjoy the journey. I would achieve something and immediately move on to the next goal without pausing to appreciate how far I'd come. But as I started acknowledging my small wins—finishing a task, having a meaningful conversation, or simply staying consistent—I began to feel more grateful and motivated.

Progress, I realized, is not always loud or dramatic. Sometimes, it's quiet, slow, and steady—like a seed growing beneath the soil. You may not see it every day, but it's happening.

I also learned the importance of breaking down big goals into smaller steps. In the past, I would set goals so large that they felt overwhelming. But when I started dividing them into small, achievable actions, everything became easier. Each small step created momentum. Each bit of progress built confidence. Over time, those small steps added up to real transformation.

Of course, my journey was not without challenges. There were moments when things didn't go as planned. Some goals took longer than expected; others needed to be changed entirely. But instead of giving up, I learned to stay flexible and adaptable. I realized that life

will always test us—not to stop us, but to strengthen us. Every time I adjusted my plans and kept going, I discovered a new layer of resilience within me.

Looking back, I can say that goal-setting gave me direction when I felt lost and, motivation when I felt stuck. It reminded me that progress isn't about perfection—it's about persistence.

Each goal achieved, each lesson learned, became a small step toward my *Next Best Version*.

More than anything, this journey taught me that success is not just about reaching the finish line. It's about the person you become while walking the path.

“Setting goals has not only helped me grow—it has helped me become.” — CPP

So if you're standing at the beginning of your own NBV journey, remember this—you don't have to know the whole way. Just take the first step. The path will reveal itself as you walk, and someday you'll look back and realize that every small goal, every effort, every moment of courage, was leading you exactly where you were meant to be—to your *Next Best Version*.

LEARNING FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

As I walked my own *Next Best Version* (NBV) journey, I realized that growth is not something we do alone. Some of the most powerful lessons come from simply observing the people around us—leaders, mentors, colleagues, and even everyday individuals who live with purpose and conviction.

If we pause and look closely, we'll notice that the people we admire have something in common: they didn't reach where they are by accident. Their progress is intentional, anchored in clarity, and guided by goals. They know where they're going and take steady steps toward it.

Think about the leaders who inspire you. Did they rise to where they are by luck, or did they set clear goals and move toward them with persistence? Whether it's a social reformer bringing change to society, a business leader building a meaningful enterprise, or a teacher quietly shaping young minds—each of them began with a sense of direction. Their purpose was not just to achieve, but to grow, to make a difference, and to become their own Next Best Version.

Then there are the people we meet every day—our peers, friends, and colleagues. Sometimes it's the person who decides to complete a new course, the one who trains for a marathon, or someone who simply sets the goal of speaking confidently in meetings. These may seem like small things, but they reflect something powerful: the courage to grow one step at a time. Each small goal achieved adds up, shaping character, confidence, and resilience.

And in our own communities, there are quiet heroes whose goals aren't about personal success but about service and contribution—the volunteer who helps a few families, the retiree who mentors youth, or the parent who decides to be more present with their children. Their actions might seem simple, but they are deeply purposeful. They show that true growth often happens through small, consistent choices guided by compassion and values.

When I look at such people—from celebrated leaders to everyday heroes—I see one clear truth: those who step into their *Next Best Version* don't drift there by chance. They choose their path. They define their goals. They align their actions with purpose, and they keep walking forward, no matter how challenging the journey becomes.

Their lives remind me that NBV is not just about personal success—it's about living with direction, making a difference, and growing into the best version of ourselves through intention and effort.

So pause for a moment and ask yourself:

Who inspires you?

What goals are you setting that truly reflect the person you want to become?

What small steps today could bring you closer to your own *Next Best Version*?

“Those who reach their Next Best Version rarely arrive there by chance. They get there because they choose, plan, and persist.” — CPP

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Goal-setting is the foundation of your NBV journey

It transforms dreams into direction and gives purpose to your actions. Without clear goals, even the strongest desire for growth can remain only a wish.

2. Effective goals are planned, not random

Take time to reflect on what truly matters to you. Then set SMART goals — Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound — to make your aspirations tangible and trackable.

3. Small steps build great progress

Break big goals into smaller, manageable tasks. Each small win builds momentum, reinforces belief, and takes you closer to your Next Best Version.

4. Celebrate progress, not just perfection

Growth is not always about big leaps. Learn to acknowledge and appreciate the small victories that happen along the way — they keep your spirit motivated and grounded.

5. Flexibility is your strength

Life rarely goes exactly as planned. Stay adaptable and willing to revise your goals and action plans as circumstances change. Resilience and openness help you stay on the path, even when it bends.

6. Accountability fuels consistency

Share your goals with mentors, friends, or peers who will encourage and challenge you. Having someone to walk beside you keeps you honest and focused.

7. Learn from leaders and people around you

The people who inspire us — whether global icons or everyday heroes — remind us that growth doesn't happen by chance. It comes from clarity, discipline, and persistence. Their stories are living proof that NBV is achieved through intentional effort.

8. Purpose makes goals powerful

“A goal without purpose is just a wish. But a goal aligned with your values becomes a bridge to your Next Best Version.”
— CPP

Goals give direction to desire, but inner barriers can still block our way—next, we examine the self-biases and limits that often stand between intent and action.

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SECTION 2
OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO
FINDING YOUR NBV

CHAPTER 6:

SELF BIAS AND SELF LIMITS AS BLOCKERS TO FIND NBV

“Your limits are not walls—they’re mirrors showing where belief ends and possibility begins.” — CPP

As we move along the path of becoming our *Next Best Version* (NBV), it’s easy to focus on the visible—skills, achievements, goals, or external challenges. Yet, some of the most powerful obstacles we face are not around us, but within us. They are subtle, silent, and often invisible. They take the form of self-biases that distort our perception, and self-limits that confine our potential.

While external barriers can be confronted with strategy and effort, internal ones require something deeper—awareness, humility, and courage. Because it is not the world that stops us most often, but the stories we tell ourselves about what we can or cannot do.

THE SUBTLE TRAP OF SELF-BIAS

Self-bias is not always obvious. It operates quietly, shaping our thoughts, colouring our perceptions, and guiding our decisions in ways we rarely notice. It is like a tinted lens through which we view life—not seeing things as they are, but as we are conditioned to see them.

We all have biases; they are part of being human. The danger lies not in having them, but in being unaware of them. When self-bias remains unrecognized, it limits our ability to grow, connect, and make objective choices.

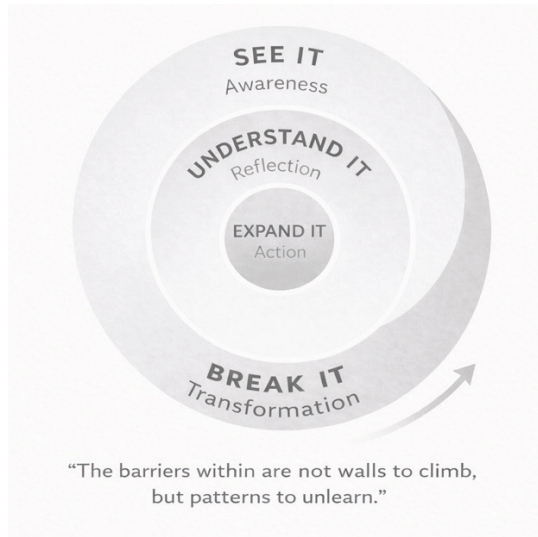
Consider confirmation bias, which makes us selectively absorb only the information that validates our existing beliefs, while discarding

anything that challenges them. Or anchoring bias, where the first impression, piece of data, or belief becomes so deeply rooted that it blinds us to alternative possibilities. Then there is the self-serving bias, which tempts us to credit ourselves for success but shift blame when outcomes fall short.

Together, these biases create what can be called a distorted mirror. It reflects a version of reality that feels comfortable—but not necessarily true. It keeps us in familiar territory, protected from discomfort, but also isolated from growth.

The real cost of self-bias is subtle yet profound: it narrows our field of vision. It convinces us that our perspective is complete, our understanding sufficient, and our interpretation right. Over time, this mind set erodes curiosity—the very quality that fuels transformation.

In the journey to NBV, curiosity is the antidote to bias. When we stay curious, we open ourselves to learning, feedback, and growth. The moment we think we already know enough, our evolution pauses.



BREAKING THE BIAS BARRIER

Overcoming self-bias is not about erasing it—that’s impossible. It’s about acknowledging it. Awareness is the first step toward liberation.

The most powerful way to start dismantling bias is through humility—the humility to admit that our view of the world is not the whole view. This mind set allows us to step outside our own frame of reference and explore others’.

Seeking diverse perspectives expands the boundaries of understanding. It requires listening not to respond, but to absorb; not to prove, but to learn. When we listen deeply, we start noticing nuances we once overlooked—and this shift, though subtle, can transform the way we lead, relate, and grow.

Equally essential is self-reflection. Taking time to examine our thoughts and behaviors help us see the unconscious patterns that shape them. Through journaling, mindfulness, or honest conversation with trusted peers, we uncover areas where bias has silently guided our choices.

Finally, feedback is the mirror we often avoid but deeply need. It reveals what our self-perception hides. Accepting feedback—without defense or denial—is one of the most powerful accelerators of growth. It allows bias to evolve into insight and self-justification to evolve into self-awareness.

“Awareness of bias is not a weakness; it is the beginning of wisdom.”
— CPP

THE INVISIBLE CAGE OF SELF-IMPOSED LIMITS

While bias distorts how we see the world, self-imposed limits distort how we see ourselves. These limits are not walls built by others — they are fences built by our fears.

They form slowly and quietly, shaped by experiences that left emotional imprints. A failure in the past becomes a lifelong caution.

A harsh comment becomes an internalized truth. A single rejection becomes the script that whispers, “*You’re not good enough.*”

Over time, these self-imposed boundaries start to define our sense of possibility. They restrict ambition, dilute confidence, and make us mistake the comfort zone for safety. The tragedy is that these limits feel real—but they are not. They are merely the stories we’ve told ourselves too many times.

The human mind is incredibly powerful. When it believes something is impossible, it stops seeking ways to make it possible. But when it even entertains the idea of possibility, the same mind becomes a creative force—capable of finding, building, or learning whatever is needed to grow.

To become our NBV, we must first break the illusion of limitation.

TRANSCENDING SELF-LIMITS

Every person who has achieved greatness—in leadership, art, science, or life—has confronted the battle between what is and what could be. The bridge between those two states is belief.

Transcending self-limits begins by transforming inner dialogue. The phrases “*I can’t,*” “*I’m not ready,*” or “*It’s too late*” are not reflections of truth—they are reflections of fear. Replace them with “*I’ll try,*” “*I’m learning,*” or “*Why not me?*” and you begin to dismantle the mental walls that confine you.

The second step is to set stretch goals—objectives that slightly scare you because they demand more than your current capacity. Stretch goals create growth pressure, not from external competition, but from internal aspiration. They awaken dormant capabilities and expand what you consider achievable.

As you stretch, celebrate progress—not perfection. Every small win weakens the chains of self-doubt. Each milestone reaffirms the belief that growth is not a quantum leap but a continuous unfolding.

The journey beyond self-limits is rarely linear. There will be hesitation, resistance, and even failure. But these are not signs of inadequacy—they are signs of expansion. Every time you step beyond comfort, you stretch the horizon of who you can become.

“The limits you fight are the limits you set. Break one, and you discover a new version of yourself.” — CPP

STEPPING BEYOND THE INNER BARRIERS

When we combine self-bias and self-limits, they create a powerful psychological trap—a cycle of selective thinking and restricted action. Bias makes us believe we already know our boundaries; limits make us afraid to test them. Together, they keep us comfortably stuck.

Breaking this cycle is the essence of the NBV journey. It requires self-honesty—to look within without judgment; self-compassion—to forgive the moments when fear held us back; and self-belief—to act even when certainty is missing.

Growth begins the moment we question the voice that says, *“I already know”* or *“I can’t.”* Those two phrases are the twin barriers between who we are and who we are becoming.

In truth, our potential is not something to be found; it is something to be uncovered. Beneath every bias is clarity waiting to emerge. Beneath every self-limit is courage waiting to rise.

When we learn to move beyond these inner barriers, we don’t just evolve—we transform. We begin to see that the journey to our *Next Best Version* is not about changing everything we are; it is about revealing everything we already are, but have not yet dared to become.

“Becoming your Next Best Version is not only about changing who you are, but about uncovering the best that already exists within you.”

– CPP



THE “NBV LENS RESET”—OVERCOMING INNER DISTORTIONS

It is a cognitive model to reset internal filters. Imagine a three-lens graphic—each lens clears as awareness increases.

Lens	Distortion	Reset Practice	NBV Outcome
Lens 1: Perception Bias	“I see the world as I believe it is.”	Invite new perspectives, pause judgments.	Broader worldview, inclusive thinking.
Lens 2: Self-Judgment Bias	“I am what my past says I am.”	Reframe failure as learning.	Renewed self-belief, adaptive growth.
Lens 3: Fear-Based Limits	“I can’t go beyond this point.”	Set stretch goals, celebrate progress.	Courage to explore new possibilities.



LEARNING FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

In my own journey, I have seen how leaders, mentors, and even peers navigate their self-biases and limits. Each encounter has been a quiet reminder that growth comes not from avoiding these blockers, but from facing them with humility and courage.

I once watched a senior leader who, despite years of success, made it a point to regularly ask his team, “*What am I not seeing?*” That simple question showed me that confidence and curiosity can co-exist. It also revealed that leaders who admit blind spots not only dismantle their own biases but inspire others to do the same.

I have also learned from colleagues who challenged self-imposed limits in unexpected ways. A young teammate who came from a modest background once told me, “*I never thought someone like me could speak in front of hundreds, but I gave it a try.*” Watching his trembling voice turn into steady conviction reminded me that courage is not the absence of fear but the decision to move forward despite it.

Outside the workplace, my community has been an equally powerful teacher. I remember meeting a woman from a rural self-help group

who started her own small enterprise despite being told for years that “*business is not for women.*” Her story reminded me that self-imposed limits are often borrowed voices of society, and when we refuse to carry them, we begin to rewrite not only our lives but also the lives of those who look up to us.

From these leaders and everyday heroes, I’ve come to see that overcoming bias and self-limits is not a one-time act but a daily practice. It is choosing awareness over assumptions, courage over comfort, and possibility over restriction. Their stories blend with my own, shaping a truth I hold close: the path to our *Next Best Version* becomes clearer every time we dare to challenge the barriers within.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM REAL LIFE: THE REAL JOURNEY IN ACTION

Growth is not defined by age, background, or profession—it is defined by the courage to question, learn, and rise.

Each of the following stories captures the power of the REAL Framework—where individuals chose to Rethink, Embrace, Act, and Liberate themselves from inner barriers.

1. THE YOUNG PROFESSIONAL WHO CHOSE COURAGE OVER BACKGROUND

A young professional from a small town once refused to apply for a global leadership program, convinced that “*people like me don’t belong there.*” Encouraged by her mentor, she decided to apply anyway. Not only was she selected, but she later became a mentor to others from similar backgrounds.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Questioned her bias about belonging.

Embrace: Accepted her nervousness and tried anyway.

Act: Applied despite fear.

Liberate: Became a role model for others.

Lesson: When we challenge our assumptions about worthiness, new paths unfold.

2. THE MID-CAREER COLLEAGUE WHO REDEFINED GROWTH

A 45-year-old professional believed he was “*too old to learn new technology.*” Instead of withdrawing, he set a small stretch goal: to complete one online certification. The joy of completing the first module reignited his confidence, and within a year, he became a digital trainer for his team.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Let go of the “too old” narrative.

Embrace: Acknowledged discomfort with technology.

Act: Enrolled in a certification course.

Liberate: Became a lifelong learner and mentor.

Lesson: Growth has no age limit; learning keeps us relevant and alive.

3. THE STUDENT WHO FOUND HER VOICE

A young student leader feared public speaking, haunted by thoughts of judgment. She began by speaking in small discussion groups and gradually progressed to addressing larger gatherings. Months later, she stood confidently on stage at a youth summit, inspiring hundreds with her story.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Realized fear was a teacher, not an enemy.

Embrace: Accepted vulnerability as part of growth.

Act: Took one small step at a time.

Liberate: Found her authentic voice and influence.

Lesson: Confidence grows not in silence, but in small, brave acts of expression.

4. THE HOMEMAKER WHO RECLAIMED HER IDENTITY

After two decades of caring for her family, a homemaker often said, *“It’s too late for me to start anything new.”* Yet her passion for baking lingered. With gentle encouragement, she started a small home-based bakery. Within a year, she was catering events and mentoring other women.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Reframed “too late” as “why not now.”

Embrace: Acknowledged self-doubt but moved forward.

Act: Took the first step by selling her cakes locally.

Liberate: Rediscovered purpose and independence.

Lesson: It’s never too late to begin the chapter you were meant to write.

5. THE RETIRED EXECUTIVE WHO FOUND NEW PURPOSE

After retirement, a senior executive felt adrift, believing his productive years were behind him. When invited to mentor young entrepreneurs, he hesitated, doubting his relevance. Once he started mentoring, he found joy and meaning in guiding others.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Questioned the belief that growth ends at retirement.

Embrace: Accepted the shift from leading to mentoring.

Act: Engaged with the next generation of professionals.

Liberate: Found renewed purpose and contribution.

Lesson: Relevance is not lost with age; it is reborn through service.

6. THE YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR WHO RELEASED PERFECTIONISM

A 28-year-old entrepreneur delayed launching her idea for months, believing everything must be “perfect.” When she finally launched, she realized that feedback and failure were her best teachers. Her business evolved faster once she embraced imperfection.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Recognized that perfection delays progress.

Embrace: Accepted imperfection as part of innovation.

Act: Launched her product despite uncertainties.

Liberate: Built agility, confidence, and momentum.

Lesson: Perfection is not the starting point—it’s the outcome of continuous action.

7. THE FATHER WHO BECAME A LEARNER AGAIN

A father in his fifties watched his teenage daughter code apps and often said, “*I’ll never understand this tech world.*” One day, she challenged him to learn alongside her. What began as a joke turned into nightly father-daughter coding sessions. Months later, he proudly built his first app—and a deeper bond.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Challenged the notion that learning belongs to the young.

Embrace: Admitted his fear of being a beginner again.

Act: Learned side by side with his daughter.

Liberate: Reclaimed curiosity and connection.

Lesson: Staying open to learning keeps both the mind and heart young.

8. THE COMMUNITY WORKER WHO TRANSFORMED LIMITATION INTO LEADERSHIP

A rural community volunteer once believed she lacked the “education” to lead projects. Yet, when a social initiative needed direction, she stepped up. By mobilizing local women and children, she not only improved village outcomes but also gained confidence to speak at national forums.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Questioned the idea that leadership requires formal degrees.

Embrace: Trusted her lived experience as strength.

Act: Took initiative within her community.

Liberate: Became a symbol of empowerment for others.

Lesson: Leadership is not given by position—it is born through purpose.

9. THE ARTIST WHO REDISCOVERED HIS VOICE

An artist who had abandoned painting for years due to self-criticism decided to pick up his brush again. He began sharing one painting a week online, slowly regaining confidence and joy. Within months, his work reached audiences he had never imagined.

REAL Application:

Rethink: Rejected the belief that his art “wasn’t good enough.”

Embrace: Accepted vulnerability in self-expression.

Act: Committed to creating consistently.

Liberate: Reconnected with his creative spirit.

Lesson: Creation is an act of liberation, not validation.

CLOSING REFLECTION

Across generations and life stages, these individuals demonstrate a shared truth: the barriers that hold us back are often self-made and self-removable.

When we learn to Rethink, Embrace, Act, and Liberate, we don't just change our outcomes, we transform our identity.

"REAL growth is not about reaching higher peaks, but about removing the walls within." — CPP

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

If someone had told me years ago that I would one day speak on global stages, I might have smiled politely, unsure whether to laugh or dream. Not because I didn't want it, but because deep inside, I believed people like me weren't meant for such things.

Until the age of twenty-five, I could barely speak a complete sentence in English. Each word felt heavy, awkward, and foreign. I would rehearse lines in my mind, only to lose them the moment I opened my mouth. The fear of being judged or ridiculed was far louder than my own voice.

I grew up in a small village near Ooty. My parents weren't formally educated, but they were rich in values—honesty, humility, and hard work. They gave me everything they could, except perhaps what they never had: confidence in a world that often measures people by polish, accent, and privilege.

At school, I studied in Tamil-medium institutions. English, to me, wasn't just another language—it was a wall. A wall that separated "them" from "us," and opportunity from limitation. Over time, I began to accept that I simply didn't belong on the other side. That was the beginning of my self-bias—quiet, invisible, and powerful enough to shape how I saw myself.

When you start believing that you don't belong, you begin to live small.

Growing up in Ooty brought its own paradox. Surrounded by lush estates and affluent families, people often assumed I came from privilege. They would call me “the estate owner’s son.” For a while, I didn’t correct them. Pretending felt safer than admitting the truth. It gave me a false sense of confidence—like wearing borrowed clothes. But deep down, I knew it wasn’t me. That quiet pretence became another cage.

I carried this mask for years. I smiled on the outside, but inside I wrestled with doubt. My self-bias whispered constantly: *“You’re not enough. You’re from a small town. You don’t speak like them. You don’t belong there.”*

One day, that voice became unbearable. I remember sitting alone and asking myself, *“What if my limitation isn’t my background, but the story I keep telling myself about it?”*

That single thought changed everything.

I decided to stop running from my fears. I began to learn English seriously—slowly, painfully, with mistakes that made me cringe but also made me grow. I practiced speaking to myself, reading aloud, watching others, and learning from every stumble. With each small improvement came a flicker of belief—a feeling that maybe I could rewrite my story.

But as soon as I crossed one barrier, another appeared—stage fear.

Until I was thirty, I would find excuses to avoid speaking in front of others. My heart would race, my hands would tremble, and my mind would go blank. I was terrified of being seen—not for who I was, but for who I wasn’t. But deep down, I knew that unless I faced it, I would never meet my *Next Best Version*.

So, I began saying yes—yes to uncomfortable opportunities, yes to small stages, yes to the very things that scared me.

I remember the first time I stood in front of a large audience. My knees felt weak. My voice shook. But as I started speaking,

something shifted. The fear didn't vanish, but it transformed—it became energy, purpose, and connection. I realized that courage isn't about not feeling fear; it's about walking through it anyway. That moment felt like the first crack in the wall I had built around myself.

Along my journey, I met people who played a quiet yet profound role in shaping my outlook. Many were women—mentors, colleagues, and friends—who showed me what authenticity truly means. Their honesty, vulnerability, and strength taught me that being real is not a weakness; it is power in its purest form.

They helped me see that authenticity is the heart of transformation. You cannot find your *Next Best Version* while pretending to be someone else.

As I began to embrace my story instead of hiding it, I noticed something beautiful—people started connecting with it. My imperfections became bridges, not barriers. When I spoke about my struggles, others saw their own reflections. My story wasn't just mine anymore; it belonged to everyone who had ever doubted themselves.

So, I began to share it more—first at small gatherings, then at larger platforms. The messages and responses I received humbled me. People said it gave them hope, courage, and clarity. That's when I realized the true purpose of overcoming self-bias—not to prove the world wrong, but to help others see what's right within themselves.

At thirty-five, I walked onto a national stage to speak at a conference. I still remember that surge of nervous excitement. Soon after, I was invited to international board meetings. And then came a moment I'll never forget: standing on the red circle of a TEDx stage.

As I spoke that day, I felt a quiet wave of gratitude. The boy who once couldn't speak a sentence of English was now using his voice to inspire others across the world. The same fear that once held me back had become my story's heartbeat.

That day, I realized something profound: finding your *Next Best Version* isn't about becoming someone new. It's about remembering who you are beneath the fear, the doubt, and the masks.

Self-bias and self-limits don't disappear overnight. But when we face them with honesty, they lose their power. They transform from barriers into teachers.

Today, when I meet young people who say, "*I can't*," I see a reflection of my younger self. And I tell them this: Your background is not your boundary—it is your beginning. Every time you challenge a limiting belief, you uncover a stronger version of yourself.

My journey taught me that we don't find our *Next Best Version* by escaping who we are—we find it by embracing it, layer by layer, truth by truth.

And once we do, something extraordinary happens—our story begins to lift others. Because every time one person breaks free from self-bias, they light a path for others to do the same.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Breaking Through Self-Bias to Find Your Next Best Version

"The biggest barriers to your Next Best Version are often the stories you tell yourself about who you are — not who you truly are."

The Inner Barriers We Build

Self-bias:

The silent voice that says, "I can't."

Self-limits:

The invisible walls we build from fear, comparison, and doubt.

Common Thoughts

- "People like me can't do that."
- "I'm not ready yet."
- "Others are better than me."
- "My background defines my ceiling."

The Journey from Bias to Belief

- Authenticity is strength.
- Vulnerability builds connection.
- Courage comes in small steps.
- Gratitude and humility anchor growth.

Your NBV Reflection Guide

- What beliefs have I been carrying that limit me?
- What is one small action I can take to prove them wrong?
- Who helps inspire me to be authentic and brave?

Knowing your limits is the first freedom; the next freedom is learning to trust—in the following chapter, we explore trust as a thrust toward your NBV.

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CHAPTER 7:

FIND YOUR NBV THROUGH TRUST

“Trust is the glue of life. It’s the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It’s the foundational principle that holds all relationships together.” — Stephen R. Covey

There are moments in life when growth feels effortless—when ideas flow, relationships strengthen, and possibilities seem endless. If you look deeper into those moments, you’ll often find one quiet force at work: Trust.

Trust is the invisible thread that binds our relationships, our sense of belonging, and our belief in what’s possible. It’s not loud or dramatic. It doesn’t demand attention. Yet it defines everything—how we connect with others, how we lead, how we love, and ultimately, how we grow into our *Next Best Version*.

When trust exists, things move with grace. You communicate without fear, take risks without paralysis, and show up with your full self. But when trust is broken or absent, everything starts to wobble. Conversations become guarded. Relationships feel transactional. Teams lose rhythm. Growth slows.

And yet, despite its fragility, trust is non-negotiable because without trust, there is no foundation strong enough to carry transformation.

THE FRAGILE STRENGTH OF TRUST

Trust is both fragile and strong, like a glass bridge that can hold enormous weight if cared for, but shatters easily when neglected.

Every act of trust—whether giving or receiving it—carries risk. When you extend trust, you open your heart to disappointment. When you receive it, you carry the responsibility to honour it. And when

you lose it—whether by deceit, betrayal, or neglect—it takes far more than apology to rebuild it.

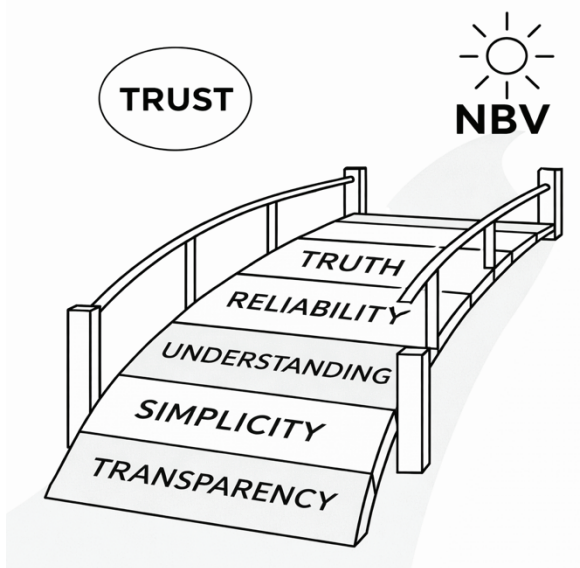
But the truth is, the risk of trusting is still far smaller than the cost of mistrust.

Because mistrust doesn't just close you off from others; it closes you off from life itself.

People who struggle to trust often find themselves guarded, lonely, or overly cautious may appear independent but often carry invisible armour—built to prevent pain, but also blocking connection.

In contrast, those who live with trust radiate ease. They believe in people's goodness without being naïve. They express themselves freely. They listen openly. They take bold steps because they know—even if they fall, someone will hold the net.

Trust, then, is not just about others. It's about how safe you feel to be yourself.



TRUST AS A MIRROR

Trust is like a mirror — what you see in others often reflects what you hold within.

If you find it hard to trust people, it often points to an inner wound somewhere along your journey, a promise was broken, a bond betrayed, or an expectation unmet.

But healing begins not by demanding others to be trustworthy, but by rebuilding trust within yourself.

When you start keeping promises to yourself—waking up when you said you would, setting boundaries you respect, speaking your truth even when it's uncomfortable—you slowly repair the inner fabric of self-trust. And that self-trust, over time, spills outward. It's how you begin to trust life again.

Before you can trust others, you must trust your own ability to handle what happens if they don't.

THE FIVE PILLARS OF TRUST—NOT AS RULES, BUT AS PRACTICES

Over the years, I've realized that trust is not built overnight or through grand gestures. It grows quietly, through small, consistent acts, like the slow layering of roots beneath a strong tree.

These five invisible roots—truth, reliability, understanding, simplicity, and transparency hold up the entire tree of trust.

Truth: The Ground You Stand On

Trust begins with truth, not just the absence of lies, but the presence of authenticity. When you speak truthfully, people feel safe. When you hide behind façades or half-truths, they begin to withdraw.

Truth is also about being real with yourself. It means admitting when you're wrong, uncertain, or afraid. It's choosing honesty over image because truth builds credibility, and credibility builds trust.

Leaders who dare to say *“I don’t know, but I’ll find out”* often earn more respect than those who pretend to have all the answers.

Reliability: The Weight of Consistency

Trust deepens when words and actions align. Reliability is the quiet signal that says, *“You can count on me.”* It’s not glamorous — showing up, following through, being on time, and keeping your word. But consistency, more than charisma, creates security.

Over time, reliability becomes an unspoken promise: *“I mean what I say, and I say what I mean.”*

Understanding: The Bridge of Empathy

Empathy is where trust breathes. When someone feels genuinely understood, they lower their guard.

Listening—truly listening—without judgment or interruption tells people, *“You matter.”*

Understanding doesn’t mean agreement; it means connection. It allows differences to coexist with respect. It tells others, *“You’re safe here.”*

Simplicity: The Power of Clarity

Complexity breeds suspicion; simplicity builds clarity.

When communication is straightforward—intentions are visible and motives clear—people relax. They don’t waste energy decoding hidden messages or reading between lines.

A clear “yes” or “no” is far more trustworthy than a polished but vague response.

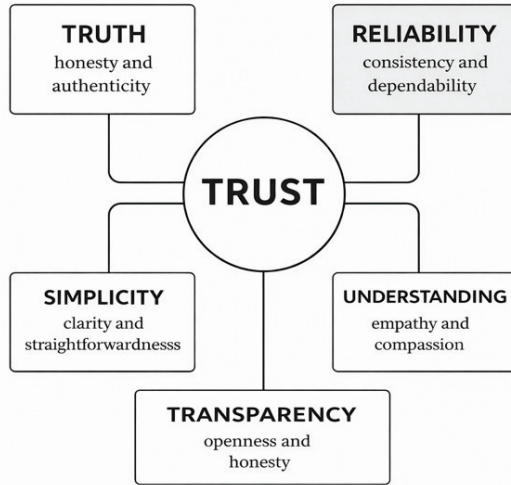
Transparency: The Courage to Be Seen

Transparency is truth in motion. It’s about openness—sharing information, admitting mistakes, and revealing the ‘why’ behind decisions.

Transparency says, *“I have nothing to hide.”*

It doesn't make you vulnerable; it makes you real. Because people don't expect perfection—they expect honesty.

5 CORE PILLARS OF TRUST

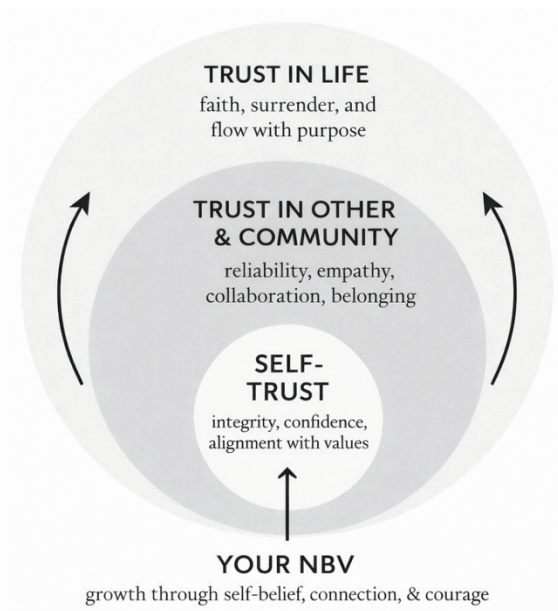


When these five practices come together, trust stops being something you manage and become something you embody.

It moves from transaction to transformation.

- Truth keeps you authentic.
- Reliability makes you dependable.
- Understanding keeps you compassionate.
- Simplicity keeps you clear.
- Transparency keeps you credible.

And together, they turn trust from a fragile bridge into a lifelong foundation.



THE HEART OF SELF-TRUST

There's one kind of trust most people never talk about—trusting yourself.

Before you can believe in others, you must first believe in your own ability to discern, to adapt, and to rise again. Self-trust doesn't mean arrogance; it means quiet confidence—the knowledge that you can depend on yourself no matter what happens.

It's about listening to your instincts and respecting your inner voice.

It's about not abandoning yourself when things get tough.

Each time you honour your word to yourself—even in small ways—you're teaching your mind: *"I can rely on me."*

Over time, this becomes the root of your personal integrity—the invisible strength that holds you steady when external trust falters.

When self-trust grows, fear shrinks.

When self-trust is strong, you no longer need to chase validation because you already have it within.

WHAT TRUST DOES TO YOU

Trust is not a value; it’s a multiplier. It amplifies everything good.

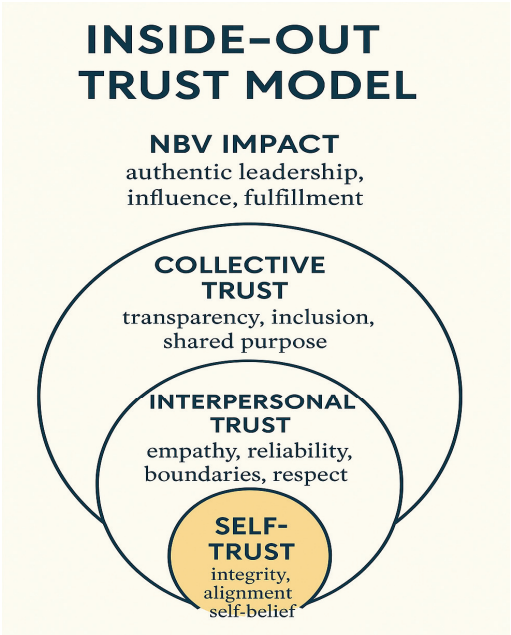
When trust exists, progress accelerates.

Teams thrive. Conversations deepen. Relationships evolve from surface-level exchanges to soulful bonds.

Without trust, you may still reach the finish line—but the journey feels heavy, full of doubt and tension.

Trust turns effort into flow. It transforms groups into communities, and plans into shared dreams.

And in your personal growth journey, trust becomes the bridge between who you are and who you are becoming.



THE COURAGE TO TRUST AGAIN

Some of the hardest lessons in life come from broken trust—when someone betrays your confidence, lets you down, or leaves without explanation. Those experiences cut deep, leaving behind scars that whisper, “*Never again.*”

But remember this: your capacity to trust is not a weakness. It is your greatest strength.

It means you have the courage to believe in goodness even after witnessing failure.

To trust again is not to forget; it is to heal.

It is to choose growth over fear, connection over caution, and life over isolation.

BECOMING YOUR NEXT BEST VERSION

Every version of you that’s stronger, wiser, or more compassionate than before was built on trust—trust in people, trust in timing, and trust in yourself.

Your *Next Best Version* will not come from perfect planning or certainty.

It will come from the courage to walk forward, knowing that even if you stumble, you’ll stand again.

Because trust is not about guarantees.

It’s about faith that something good will emerge from the unknown, that people can surprise you, and that you, too, are worthy of being trusted.

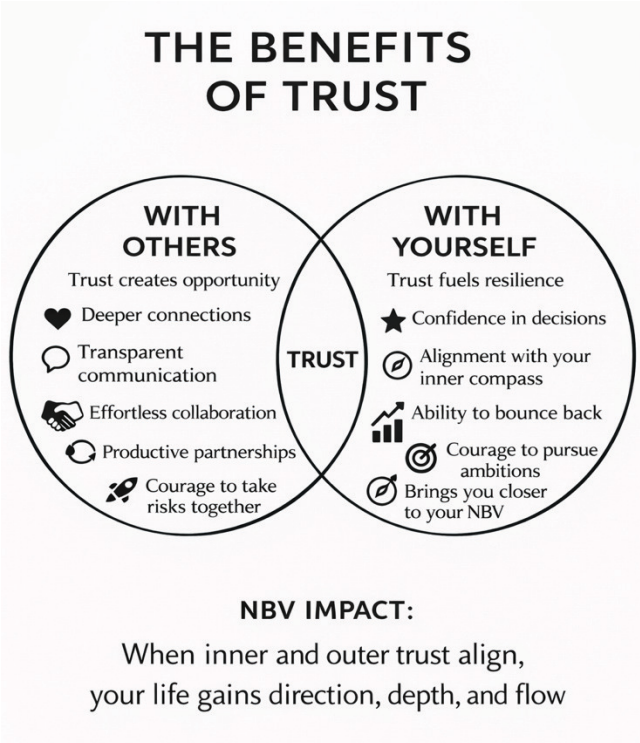
When you live from that place, growth is no longer forced; it becomes natural.

You stop controlling outcomes and start flowing with life.

You begin to see that trust isn't something you build once—it's something you practice every day, in every interaction, including the one with yourself.

And in that practice, you find the quiet, steady power that carries you toward your *Next Best Version*.

“Trust is built in small, quiet moments, long before it speaks through big outcomes.” — CPP



MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I look back on my journey, I realize that trust has quietly shaped every chapter of my life.

It has been both my greatest teacher and, at times, my hardest lesson.

In my younger years, I found it difficult to trust easily. I built invisible walls, thinking they would protect me from disappointment or betrayal. But those same walls kept me from truly connecting with others. Over time, I came to understand something simple yet profound: without trust, we may survive, but we never truly belong.

I still remember something my mentor once told me:

“Trust cannot be rushed; it grows with time, like a tree that strengthens its roots in silence.”

Those words stayed with me. But as I observed his life, I noticed that he didn’t wait months or years to trust people. He began with 100% trust from day one, and if it was broken, he let it go. That changed me.

I began to live by the same principle: start with full trust, and adjust only if needed.

It was liberating.

Because when you begin from a place of full trust, you are not guarding yourself—you are opening yourself. You are saying to the world, *“I believe in goodness first.”*

WHAT TRUST HAS TAUGHT ME

Over the years, trust has revealed itself not as a single act but as a living rhythm—a balance between giving and guarding, between risk and reward.

Yes, I’ve been let down. I’ve experienced betrayal, silence, and disappointment.

But I’ve also discovered something even more powerful: trust is always worth the risk.

When you choose to trust, you choose growth over fear.

You choose connection over caution.

And you choose love over control.

I've come to see that trust isn't a transaction; it's a commitment.

It's not a fragile promise whispered in comfort; it's a living bridge built through actions, patience, and shared truth.

MY PERSONAL DEFINITION OF TRUST

For me, TRUST means:

To Rely Upon Someone Throughout

“To rely upon someone throughout.”

Such a simple phrase — yet it carries the entire weight of what makes relationships meaningful.

Trust says, “I can rely on you, and you can rely on me.”

It's honesty. It's support. It's respect.

But above all, it's consistency — showing up when it matters, even when it's not convenient.

When we live this way, trust stops being an abstract value; it becomes a way of life.

And through it, we begin to build not just connections, but communities that heal, uplift, and grow together.

TRUST AND MY NEXT BEST VERSION

As my journey unfolded, I began to see that trust was not only about others—it was about me.

It began with self-trust, believing in my own abilities, instincts, and purpose.

When I trusted myself, I stopped second-guessing every decision. I found clarity in my choices and courage in my steps.

Self-trust gave me resilience.

It taught me that mistakes don't define me; they refine me.

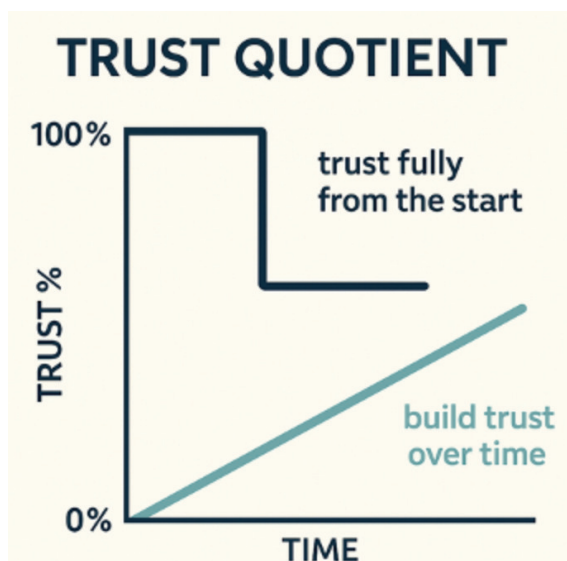
It helped me take risks, try again after failure, and hold faith when things were uncertain.

Then came the next layer: trusting others.

By extending trust, I opened my life to collaboration, friendship, and shared purpose.

It allowed me to build relationships grounded in authenticity, where we lifted each other higher instead of competing to stay ahead.

Trust became the foundation of everything good in my life—my growth, my work, and my peace.



THE BRIDGE OF TRUST

If I could describe trust visually, I'd see it as a bridge—one that connects who I am to who I am becoming.

Each plank on that bridge is made of truth, reliability, understanding, simplicity, and transparency.

Every time I practice these, the bridge strengthens, and it carries me closer to my *Next Best Version* (NBV).

Trust is no longer just a word to me.

It's a daily practice, a courageous act, and a quiet declaration that says:

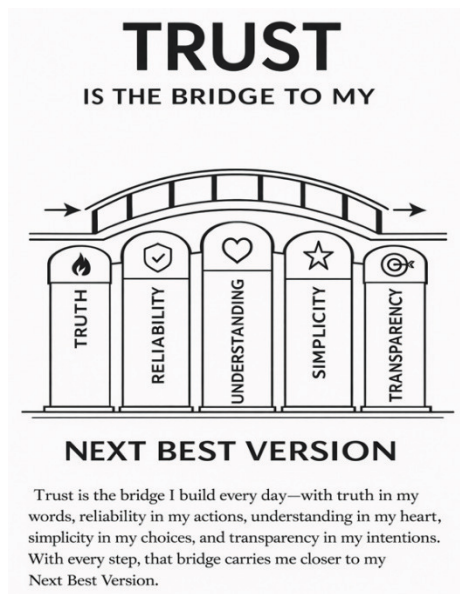
"I believe—in myself, in others, and in life's unfolding."

And in that belief, I continue to grow:

more open, more grounded, and more me than I have ever been.

"Trust is the bridge I build every day—with truth in my words, reliability in my actions, understanding in my heart, simplicity in my choices, and transparency in my intentions."

With every step, that bridge carries me closer to my Next Best Version." — CPP



LEARNING FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Trust is not built in isolation; it is modelled, practiced, and reinforced by the people around us. Over the years, I have observed 10 powerful lessons from leaders, mentors, colleagues, and community members that show why trust is the true game-changer:

- **Words mean nothing without actions**

Leaders who match words with actions show that trust is built by consistency. Promises without delivery break credibility, and once lost, trust is rarely rebuilt to its original strength.

- **Humility deepens trust**

Mentors who admit mistakes prove that vulnerability is not weakness—it is strength. People trust those who are real, not those who pretend to be flawless.

- **Confidences are sacred**

Colleagues who keep private conversations private demonstrate that discretion builds trust. Break confidentiality once, and the damage can last forever.

- **Presence builds reliability**

Community members who show up consistently remind us that trust grows not through grand gestures but through reliability. Trust thrives in the everyday, not just in the extraordinary.

- **Respectful challenges strengthen bonds**

Young professionals who ask tough questions respectfully reveal that trust allows space for both candour and listening. When people can disagree without fear, partnerships multiply in value.

- **Generosity over competition**

Teams that celebrate each other's wins instead of competing destructively create a culture of abundance. Trust grows when success is shared, not hoarded.

- **Trust multiplies opportunities**

Every strong business partnership I've seen succeeds on trust. Contracts and strategies do matter, but without trust, partnerships collapse. With trust, opportunities expand a hundredfold.

- **Broken trust rarely recovers fully**

I've learned that when trust is betrayed—whether by dishonesty, hidden agendas, or unreliability—the relationship may continue, but the foundation is weakened forever. Rebuilding trust is possible, but the scar remains.

- **Trust accelerates growth**

In teams, when trust is present, decisions are faster, collaboration is smoother, and innovation flows freely. Without trust, even the most talented teams stagnate in doubt and hesitation.

- **Trust is the ultimate currency of leadership**

Titles may earn compliance, but only trust earns commitment. Leaders who inspire loyalty do so not by authority but by trust, and that trust turns ordinary relationships into extraordinary impact.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Trust is the foundation of your NBV journey

Without trust, relationships remain shallow and progress is limited. With trust, every connection becomes richer and more impactful.

2. Trust stands on 5 unshakable pillars

Truth, reliability, understanding, simplicity, and transparency are not just values; they are daily practices.

3. Self-trust unlocks confidence and resilience

Honoring your values and instincts empowers growth without self-doubt.

4. The benefits of trust are exponential

Trust creates deeper bonds, multiplies opportunities, and fuels resilience.

5. Trust is fragile but invaluable

It takes years to build, seconds to break, and must be guarded carefully.

6. Trust accelerates growth and impact

It eliminates friction, fuels commitment, and turns connections into outcomes.

7. Trust is the ultimate enabler of your Next Best Version (NBV)

Trust provides the clarity and courage required to grow into your NBV.

Trust opens doors that doubt keeps closed; yet fear can still hold us back—next, we face fear directly and learn how it hides our potential.

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CHAPTER 8:

FEAR! THE REASON OF NOT BEING YOUR BEST VERSION

“Face off—if you are afraid of something, face it.” — CPP

This mantra has guided my approach to life, and it lies at the heart of why fear must be confronted if we want to grow into our *Next Best Version* (NBV).

Fear is one of the most powerful human emotions—primal, instinctive, and deeply embedded in our DNA. It was designed to keep us safe, to alert us to danger, to help us survive. But in today’s world, where the biggest battles are often internal, fear has shifted from being our protector to becoming our prison guard.

FEAR: THE SILENT SABOTEUR

Fear doesn’t always come roaring into our lives. Often, it whispers. It hides behind logic, disguises itself as caution, or masks as procrastination. It shows up as hesitation before speaking up in a meeting, the avoidance of a new challenge, or the thought: *“What if I fail?”*

Bit by bit, it builds invisible walls around us.

Over time, fear reshapes our decisions, choices, and even our identity. It convinces us to:

Choose comfort over growth,

Seek safety over opportunity,

Stay silent instead of standing tall.

In doing so, we begin to live smaller than we were meant to. The greatest tragedy is not in failing, but in never trying because fear told us not to.

THE PARALYZING EFFECT OF FEAR

Fear is not just emotional—it is physiological and psychological. It floods our body with anxiety, fogs our mind with doubt, and traps us in loops of overthinking.

We start to believe the stories fear tells us:

“You’re not ready.”

“You’re not good enough.”

“You’ll embarrass yourself.”

And when we start believing those stories, they become our reality.

Fear’s real damage is not in the moment of panic; it’s in the slow erosion of confidence that follows. It convinces us that the unknown is dangerous when, in truth, it’s often the place where our true potential lives.

Left unchecked, fear breeds inaction.

And inaction kills more dreams than failure ever could.

“Fear fades when purpose grows louder than doubt.” — CPP

FEAR AND THE NBV MINDSET

Your NBV is not born in a comfort zone. It takes shape in the moments when you step beyond what feels safe—when you dare to face discomfort, uncertainty, and vulnerability.

The NBV journey is not about erasing fear; it’s about redefining your relationship with it.

Ask yourself:

What does this fear reveal about me?

What is it protecting me from?

What growth is waiting for me on the other side of this fear?

When you ask these questions, fear transforms from an enemy to a teacher. It points to the areas where transformation is waiting to happen.

FACE YOUR FEARS—THE “FACE OFF” MINDSET

“Face off” is more than a motivational slogan—it is a way of life.

It means looking fear in the eye, naming it, and acting anyway. It is not about recklessness but about courage.

Courage is not the absence of fear; it’s movement despite fear.

Every time you take that small step forward, fear loses its hold. What once felt impossible becomes manageable. The monster you imagined in your mind often turns out to be a shadow, not a giant.

That first step—the email you were afraid to send, the conversation you were afraid to have, the stage you were afraid to stand on—becomes the door to a new version of yourself.

And once you’ve walked through it, there’s no going back.

THE POWER OF COURAGE

Think of courage as a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it gets.

The first time you act with courage, your voice may tremble. The second time, you may still feel unsure but steady. By the tenth time, courage becomes a reflex—your natural response to fear.

Courage redefines your internal compass. Instead of asking, “*What if I fail?*” you begin to ask, “*What if I grow?*”

And that single shift changes everything.

When you live with courage, fear becomes a signal—not to stop, but to prepare for growth. It means you are on the edge of expansion, stepping into a version of yourself you’ve never met before.

THE NEXT BEST VERSION (NBV) OF YOURSELF

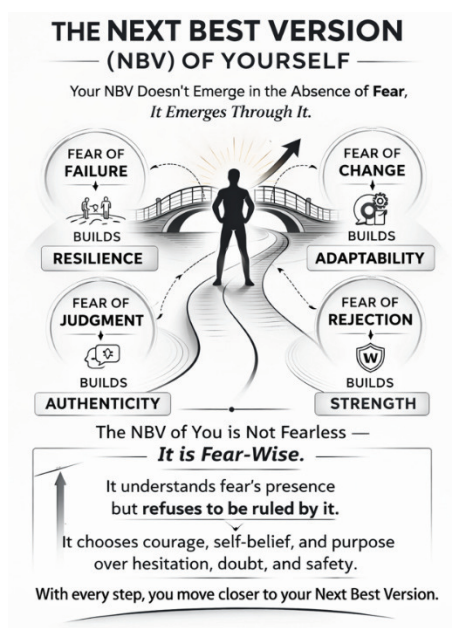
Your NBV doesn’t emerge in the absence of fear.

It emerges through fear—each time you choose courage, self-belief, and purpose over hesitation, doubt, and safety.

Every fear you face adds a new dimension to who you are:

- Fear of failure builds resilience.
- Fear of judgment builds authenticity.
- Fear of rejection builds strength.
- Fear of change builds adaptability.

The NBV of you is not fearless; it is fear-wise. It understands fear’s presence but refuses to be ruled by it.



EMBRACING REJECTION AND FAILURE

Among the many faces of fear, two stand out the most:

Fear of rejection and fear of failure.

We fear being told “no.” We fear being judged. We fear being left out or not being enough.

But rejection and failure are not verdicts; they are mirrors showing us what needs refinement, what needs resilience, and what needs realignment.

Failure teaches lessons success can never offer.

Rejection forces us to clarify our purpose.

Both act as friction points that sharpen our edge.

Every great achiever from inventors to artists and leaders to athletes has walked through rejection, ridicule, and failure. What set them apart was not that they felt less fear, but that they chose to walk anyway.

They turned fear into feedback, and feedback into fuel.

TRANSFORMING FEAR INTO GROWTH

To align fear with your NBV journey:

- Name your fears. What exactly are you afraid of? Naming them disarms their mystery.
- Challenge their truth. Ask: *“Is this fact or assumption?”* Most fears are imagination, not reality.
- Take one small action. Progress is the best antidote to fear.
- Reflect on your courage moments. Each time you faced fear, you grew—remember that.
- Surround yourself with courage-builders: people who encourage growth rather than reinforce fear.

When you transform fear into learning, hesitation into action, and doubt into awareness, you become unstoppable.

THE COURAGE EQUATION

**FEAR + ACTION
= GROWTH**

**FEAR + AVOIDANCE
= REGRET**

Every day presents you
with this choice.

And each time you choose
action over avoidance, you
evolve into your
Next Best Version.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I look back on my journey, I realize that fear has always walked beside me quietly, persistently, and sometimes overwhelmingly. It showed up in so many ways - fear of water, of heights, of people, of large crowds, of traveling, and most of all fear of public speaking.

Among them, public speaking felt like climbing a mountain without a rope. The very thought of standing before an audience made my heart race and my palms sweat. My mind would freeze, and I'd search desperately for a way to avoid it. Each missed opportunity left behind a quiet disappointment—not because I had failed, but because I hadn't even tried. Deep down, I knew that if I wanted to grow into my *Next Best Version* (NBV)—the stronger, braver, and more complete version of myself—I couldn't keep running from this fear.

So, I decided to face it—not all at once, but step by step.

At first, I began small—speaking up in meetings, saying a few words when the opportunity arose. Those few words turned into small presentations. Slowly, the shaking in my hands turned into steady gestures, and the quiver in my voice turned into conviction. One day, I realized I was standing in front of a larger audience—not with perfection, but with purpose.

That day changed everything. I discovered something profound: public speaking wasn't about me at all. It wasn't about how I looked or whether I stumbled over words; it was about the message I carried. When I focused on sharing an idea rather than fighting my nerves, everything shifted. My fear began to dissolve in the light of connection.

In time, what was once my biggest weakness became one of my deepest joys. Preparing for a talk became a process of reflection and creativity. Speaking became an act of service—an opportunity to share lessons, spark thoughts, and connect with others.

But fear didn't stop with public speaking. It found new forms, especially in the fear of failure. I've faced my share of failures: projects that didn't work out, strained relationships, academic disappointments, financial setbacks, and personal let downs. Each one hurt. Each one left a scar.

Yet, in every failure, I stood at the same crossroads: to be defined by it or to be refined by it. And I chose to learn.

I learned that failure is not the opposite of success; it is the foundation of it. It humbles you, sharpens your focus, and teaches lessons that comfort never can. I learned to ask myself not, *"Why did I fail?"* but *"What is this trying to teach me?"*

In my career, failures became fuel—the lessons from a failed project became the reason the next one succeeded. In relationships, heartbreak taught me authenticity and boundaries. In my personal life, loss revealed the importance of self-kindness and purpose.

Over time, I came to understand something powerful: fear and failure are not enemies; they are teachers in disguise. Fear shows us where growth lives. Failure shows us how to get there.

TRANSFORMING FEAR: FROM WALL TO WINDOW



Fear used to feel like a giant wall—blocking me from progress, hiding my potential. But one day, I realized that the wall wasn’t made of stone; it was made of thoughts. When you start to question those thoughts, cracks appear, and light seeps through.

The first step was reframing fear. Instead of seeing it as a sign of weakness, I began to see it as a signal that something important was at stake: that growth was near. Fear meant I cared. Fear meant there was something worth doing on the other side.

Then I started breaking my fears into smaller, actionable steps. Big fears feel impossible when you stare at them all at once. But when you divide them into small, doable parts, progress becomes possible. Each small victory—every time I spoke up, took a risk, or tried again—built my confidence, brick by brick.

I also learned not to face fear alone. Conversations with mentors, friends, and even professionals helped me see things differently. Hearing someone say, *“I’ve been there too,”* created space for courage to grow. Fear loses its power when shared becomes manageable when spoken aloud.

The most important lesson, however, was to strive for progress, not perfection. For years, I had believed that courage meant doing something flawlessly. But true courage is simply doing something—even imperfectly—despite fear. Each imperfect attempt adds strength to your story.

And finally, I learned to celebrate every small win. Overcoming fear is not a single grand moment; it’s a thousand small steps. Every time I said yes instead of no, every time I stood on a stage, every time I tried again after falling—I learned to pause, smile, and acknowledge how far I’d come. Each win became fuel for the next.

THE SHIFT WITHIN

As the years passed, I noticed a quiet transformation. I was no longer trying to eliminate fear—I was learning to work with it. Fear still appeared, but now it spoke a different language. Instead of saying, *“Don’t do it,”* it whispered, *“This matters.”*

Today, I no longer hide from uncertainty. I still feel nervous before a big talk, anxious before a tough decision, or hesitant before a new challenge, but I move forward anyway. Because now I know: courage doesn’t mean you’re never afraid. Courage means you act, even when you are.

Fear and failure have become my silent teachers—pushing me, shaping me, reminding me that every fall carries a lesson, every fear hides a gift, and every setback holds the seed of growth.

Becoming the *Next Best Version* of myself has not been about removing fear; it's been about transforming it. Each time I faced it, I found more clarity, strength, and depth within.

If I could share one message with anyone standing at the edge of their own fear, it would be this:

Don't wait for fear to disappear. Step forward anyway.

On the other side of that fear lies the version of you that you've been waiting to meet.

LEARNING FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Fear is often the silent force that holds people back from becoming their best selves. It takes many forms: fear of failure, fear of rejection, fear of judgment, or even fear of the unknown.

Yet, when we look at leaders and people who inspire us, one common pattern emerges: they don't allow fear to dictate their lives.

Instead, they treat fear as a signal: a compass pointing them toward growth and possibility.

Throughout history, leaders, entrepreneurs, athletes, and artists have all faced fear. None were immune.

What set them apart was their relationship with fear. They understood that fear is an inevitable part of doing something meaningful. Instead of running from it, they embraced it, allowing it to fuel their courage.

Many successful people see risk-taking not as recklessness but as a necessary step toward growth.

The possibility of failure never stopped them because they reframed failure itself as feedback, as learning, and as a stepping stone. Innovators who disrupted industries rarely got it right the first time.

Their early attempts were filled with mistakes, rejections, and setbacks.

But instead of shrinking away, they leaned into those experiences—learning something valuable each time until success arrived.

The same holds true for everyday leaders—the people around us who quietly demonstrate courage:

- A teacher who once dreaded public speaking but went on to inspire generations of students.
- A colleague who left a secure job to start something new because the fear of regret outweighed the fear of failure.
- A parent who moved across countries to give their family a better life.

Each story is a reminder that fear loses its power when purpose becomes stronger than fear itself.

The common thread is clear; fear loses its grip when people commit to growth.

Once that choice is made, fear transforms from an obstacle into an ally, sharpening focus, building resilience, and inspiring preparation and persistence.

Every story of success carries within it a story of fear; faced, challenged, and ultimately overcome.

The lesson we can take from leaders and those around us is simple yet profound:

Fear is not the end; it is the beginning.

It is the testing ground where courage is born.

When individuals accept failure as part of success, trust themselves to take risks, and move forward despite doubt, they unlock new possibilities.

These are the people who remind us that while fear is universal, so is courage.

And every time fear is overcome, a new version of the self emerges—stronger, bolder, and closer to the *Next Best Version*.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Fear is natural, but not permanent

It is a universal emotion, a messenger that something meaningful lies ahead.

2. Courage is built through action, not the absence of fear

Every time you act despite being afraid, your courage muscle strengthens.

3. Failure and rejection are not endings

They are powerful teachers that sharpen your resilience and bring clarity to your purpose.

4. Growth begins at the edge of discomfort

The moment you step outside your comfort zone, transformation begins.

5. Fear fades when faced with purpose

When your “why” is stronger than your fear, your actions become unstoppable.

6. Small steps create big shifts

Each small act of bravery compounds into confidence and lasting change.

7. Progress matters more than perfection

Consistent, imperfect effort builds mastery and self-trust.

8. Support fuels strength

Sharing fears and learning from others transforms vulnerability into connection.

9. Celebrate every win — big or small

Recognition of progress reinforces belief and motivation.

10. Your NVB is not fearless — it is fear-wise

It learns, grows, and evolves through fear, using it as a stepping stone toward fulfillment and authenticity.

Naming fear strips it of power; the next step is to quiet the inner critic that amplifies it—next, we'll explore negative self-talk and how to overcome it.

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CHAPTER 9:

THE POWER OF NEGATIVE SELF-TALK AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT

“The voice inside you should be your ally, not your critic—teach it to speak with kindness.” — CPP

Have you ever noticed the quiet conversations running inside your mind: that subtle voice, those comments and critiques that sometimes discourage you?

This inner dialogue, known as self-talk, shapes how you see yourself and how you live your life. It’s the lens through which you interpret your experiences, evaluate your actions, and decide what you’re capable of.

But when this voice turns harsh, judgmental, and unforgiving, it becomes negative self-talk—one of the most silent yet powerful barriers to personal growth.

It often begins innocently:

“I’m not ready.”

“I’m not good enough.”

“What if I fail?”

At first, these may sound like protective thoughts meant to keep you from making mistakes or taking risks. But when repeated, they start forming a mental loop—a pattern that conditions you to doubt yourself, dismiss your strengths, and shrink your potential.

Think about it:

The student who knows the answers during class but freezes during an exam, paralyzed by the thought, *“I’ll mess this up.”*

The professional who prepares thoroughly for a big presentation but suddenly hears, *“They’ll see through you.”*

The artist who holds back sharing their work, whispering to themselves, *“It’s not good enough yet.”*

In all these cases, the limitation isn’t external—it’s internal.

It’s not the situation that holds them back; it’s the story they tell themselves about the situation.

Over time, negative self-talk becomes habitual. It convinces you to play safe, stay small, and avoid uncertainty. It tricks you into thinking your dreams are unrealistic, your failures define you, and your best efforts aren’t enough.

When that happens, your mind stops being a compass that guides you and starts being a cage that confines you.

But the truth is empowering:

Negative self-talk is not a fact. It’s a pattern—and patterns can be changed.

By developing awareness, compassion, and intentional self-guidance, you can retrain your inner voice. You can turn your inner critic into your inner coach: one that helps you move toward your *Next Best Version* (NBV) with confidence and clarity.

THE HIDDEN IMPACT OF NEGATIVE SELF-TALK ON YOUR NBV JOURNEY

Your NBV journey is about becoming more aligned with your authentic potential: living with greater purpose, clarity, and courage.

But negative self-talk quietly erodes that alignment. It shapes your perceptions, influences your decisions, and limits your imagination.

The most dangerous part of negative self-talk is how subtle it can be. It rarely announces itself loudly. Instead, it hides under the guise of “being realistic” or “not getting your hopes up.” It may even sound

rational —“*Maybe I shouldn’t try this now,*” or “*People like me don’t succeed in that field.*”

Yet beneath those words lies a deep undercurrent of fear and self-doubt: a belief that you are somehow not enough.

And that belief can quietly sabotage your NBV journey by:

- Lowering your confidence when you face new challenges.
- Making you interpret setbacks as personal failures instead of learning moments.
- Keeping you from taking bold steps toward your goals.

Every person, student, athlete, artist, entrepreneur, or leader—faces moments when this inner critic gets loud.

What defines growth is not whether that voice appears, but how you respond when it does.

Consider these real-world parallels:

- A writer who faced years of rejection yet continued to believe in her story.
- An athlete who doubted their strength but trained anyway until their potential proved itself.
- A leader who questioned their ability but chose courage over comfort, transforming not just their path but the lives of others.

Their success didn’t come from silencing the voice—it came from reframing it.

They learned to recognize their inner critic not as an enemy but as a signal: a sign pointing toward growth.

Transformation begins the moment you change the conversation within.

Because when you change your inner dialogue, you change the direction of your life.

FIVE STEPS TO TRANSFORM NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

Each step below helps you shift from being your own critic to becoming your own coach—the foundation of your NBV journey.

1. BECOME AWARE OF YOUR THOUGHTS

Awareness is the first step toward transformation.

You can't change what you don't notice. Most of us move through the day unaware of how critical our inner dialogue has become.

Start by observing your thoughts, especially when things go wrong or when you face pressure.

Ask yourself:

“What is my inner voice saying right now?”

“Is it helping me move forward or holding me back?”

Journaling or pausing for reflection helps uncover recurring patterns. You'll begin to notice that your self-talk often repeats themes—doubt, comparison, fear, or guilt. Recognizing these is the first step toward rewriting them.

Awareness transforms your relationship with your thoughts. It shifts you from being reactive to being responsive from being trapped by your mind to taking charge of it.

2. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION

Being kind to yourself isn't self-indulgence—it's self-leadership.

When you make a mistake or fall short, your critic might say, *“I'm such a failure.”* But your coach would ask, *“What can I learn from this?”*

That shift from judgment to curiosity is where growth begins.

Self-compassion doesn't mean ignoring flaws; it means understanding that imperfection is part of progress.

Every misstep is not a verdict—it's a lesson on the way to your *Next Best Version*.

When you respond to yourself with kindness, your mind becomes a safe space for growth. You begin to move not out of fear of failure but out of faith in learning.

3. CHALLENGE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Not every thought you think is true.

Your mind is a storyteller and sometimes it tells stories that limit you.

When your inner voice says, *"I'll never succeed,"* or *"I always mess things up,"* stop and challenge it.

Ask:

"Is this a fact or an assumption?"

"What evidence do I have for this belief?"

Often, you'll find that your inner critic distorts reality, exaggerating flaws, and minimizing strengths.

By questioning these distortions, you create space for truth to emerge.

Replace harsh thoughts with balanced perspectives like:

"I made a mistake this time, but I'm improving."

"I don't know everything yet, but I can learn."

This shift builds mental clarity; the foundation for resilience and authentic confidence.

4. PRACTICE AFFIRMATIONS

Your words are powerful; they shape how you see yourself and the world.

Affirmations may feel unnatural at first, but with repetition, they rewire your subconscious mind.

Start with simple, grounded statements:

“I am capable.”

“I am learning every day.”

“I am enough.”

Over time, these phrases anchor you in truth. They remind you of your worth and potential when fear tries to make you forget.

Affirmations help bridge the gap between who you are and who you’re becoming—the core essence of your NBV journey.

5. SEEK SUPPORT AND UPLIFTING VOICES

No one grows alone.

Sometimes, we need external voices to remind us of our inner strength—mentors, friends, coaches, or communities that uplift instead of drain us.

Surround yourself with people who reflect your potential back to you when you can’t see it. Their belief in you strengthens your belief in yourself.

Growth thrives in environments of encouragement. When your inner critic gets loud, borrow the confidence others have in you, until you can rebuild your own.

FROM CRITIC TO COACH

Your self-talk is the story your mind keeps telling you.

If that story constantly says, *“You’re not enough,”* your life will begin to mirror that belief. But when your story begins to say, *“You’re learning, growing, and capable,”* your reality will shift to match it.

This is the essence of the NBV journey—the transformation from being trapped by old patterns to creating new possibilities through conscious self-direction.

Turning your inner critic into your inner coach isn't about ignoring challenges or pretending everything is fine. It's about choosing a better lens—one that sees every struggle as training for the *Next Best Version* of you.

Your mind can be your cage or your compass.

Your words can limit your growth or lead you to it.

And your self-talk—when transformed with awareness, compassion, and courage—becomes your most powerful ally in creating the life you are meant to live.

FROM CRITIC TO COACH	
How transforming your self-talk aligns with NBV growth	
FROM	TO
Harsh self-judgment	Compassionate accountability
Belief in limitation	Belief in potential
Negative self-talk	Constructive self-talk
Playing it small	Intentional risk-taking

WHAT SCIENCE SAYS ABOUT NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

Modern psychology has spent decades studying how our inner dialogue shapes our thoughts, emotions, and behaviour. What once seemed like “just talking to ourselves” is now recognized as a powerful force that can either limit or liberate us. Here’s what research reveals:

1. THE CYCLE OF SELF-TALK: HOW THOUGHTS BECOME REALITY

Psychologists have long observed that our inner dialogue—especially when it’s negative—can turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Dr. Aaron Beck, often called the father of cognitive therapy, discovered that people tend to interpret events through “cognitive distortions”—patterns of thinking that exaggerate the negative and minimize the positive. When we repeatedly tell ourselves, “*I’m not good enough*,” we unconsciously behave in ways that reinforce that belief.

For example, if someone believes they are poor at public speaking, they may avoid opportunities to speak up. Over time, this avoidance prevents improvement, confirming the original belief. This mental loop becomes a cycle of self-limitation—our thoughts quietly shape our behaviors, and our behaviors then reinforce those same thoughts.

In essence, what we think repeatedly becomes what we live repeatedly.

Changing that pattern starts by noticing the inner voice, questioning its truth, and replacing self-criticism with curiosity and compassion.

2. SELF-COMPASSION AS A POWERFUL ANTIDOTE

While many people think being hard on themselves will push them to do better, science shows the opposite.

Dr. Kristin Neff’s pioneering research on self-compassion demonstrates that when we treat ourselves with kindness—just as we would comfort a struggling friend—we experience lower anxiety, higher resilience, and greater emotional balance.

Self-compassion doesn’t mean ignoring mistakes or lowering standards. It means acknowledging imperfections without judgment, and understanding that struggle is part of being human.

When we respond to ourselves with warmth instead of criticism, the brain's stress centers calm down. This creates space for clearer thinking, better decision-making, and emotional recovery.

Over time, self-compassion replaces the harsh inner critic with an inner ally—one that supports growth rather than sabotaging it.

3. PERFORMANCE AND THE POWER OF POSITIVE SELF-TALK

The impact of self-talk extends far beyond mental health—it influences performance and success.

Sports psychologists, like Dr. Jamie Hardy, have found that athletes who consciously use positive self-talk (phrases like *"I can handle this,"* or *"Stay focused, stay calm"*) perform significantly better under pressure than those who engage in negative self-talk (phrases like *"I'll probably miss this shot,"* or *"I'm too tired to win"*).

This isn't just psychological—it's physiological.

Positive self-talk helps regulate heart rate, improves concentration, and reduces cortisol (the stress hormone), allowing the brain and body to work in sync. Whether it's an athlete on the field or a professional in a high-stakes meeting, the language we use with ourselves directly affects how well we perform.

So, training our self-talk is much like training a muscle. With practice, it grows stronger, steadier, and more supportive, helping us stay composed and confident in the moments that matter most.

Science makes it clear:

Negative self-talk isn't just "in your head"—it has real effects on your brain, your emotions, your behaviour, and even your physical performance. But the good news is equally powerful: you can rewire it.

Every time you choose a kind word over a cruel one, every time you challenge a limiting belief, you're reshaping your mind.

Neuroscience calls this neuroplasticity—your brain’s ability to change and form new pathways through consistent thought and behaviour.

In simple terms:

- Change your words.
- Change your thoughts.
- Change your life.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

For a long time, I was my own harshest critic.

I constantly found faults in myself, doubted my abilities, and compared myself unfavorably to others. No one needed to tell me I wasn’t good enough because that voice inside my head was already doing it, louder than anyone else could.

Looking back, I realize that I grew up in an environment where fear and criticism often replaced encouragement. Parents warned me about failure more than they celebrated effort. Teachers pointed out mistakes more than they noticed progress. And friends, knowingly or not, mocked rather than motivated.

Slowly, I began to believe that I simply wasn’t capable.

It felt like carrying a backpack full of heavy stones—each stone representing a self-criticism, a fear, or a doubt. Over the years, that backpack became heavier. I stopped trying new things because I was afraid of failing. I avoided challenges because I didn’t believe I could succeed. I lived in a world of “what ifs”—what if I fail, what if I’m not good enough, what if people laugh?

And eventually, that backpack became so heavy I could hardly move forward.

Then, something shifted.

One day, I realized that the energy I was putting into the world was exactly what I was getting back. The more negatively I thought, the more negativity I attracted. The more I doubted myself, the more people around me reflected that doubt. It was like living in a mirror that only showed the darker parts of me.

That realization was my turning point.

I understood that if I wanted to experience light, I had to become the source of it. No one else could change that for me. Positivity and happiness were not rewards that came from success; they were choices I had to make before success arrived.

So, I began small.

Every morning, I would look at myself in the mirror and say one kind thing. It felt awkward at first, but I kept going. I replaced *“I can’t”* with *“I’ll try.”* I replaced *“I’m not good enough”* with *“I’m learning.”*

I surrounded myself with people who lifted me up instead of pulling me down. And slowly, one by one, I started removing the stones from that backpack.

The biggest breakthrough came when I learned self-compassion.

For years, I had treated myself in ways I wouldn’t treat a friend. I would criticize myself for every mistake, replay failures in my mind, and speak harshly to myself. But when I began showing myself kindness—when I said, *“It’s okay to make mistakes,”* or *“You did your best today”*—something inside began to heal.

That healing gave me courage.

Courage to take risks.

Courage to accept imperfections.

Courage to keep moving even when the path was unclear.

It didn’t happen overnight—it took years of awareness, effort, and practice. But over time, I transformed that inner critic into an inner

coach. And for the last 25 years, I've lived with a positive, resilient mindset that no one can shake, unless I allow it.

Today, I know this truth deep in my heart:

I always have a choice.

Every moment, I can choose between doubt and belief, fear and courage, negativity and hope.

That choice, the one I make every single day is what defines who I am and who I continue to become.

This journey from negativity to positivity became the foundation of my *Next Best Version* (NBV). It taught me that growth begins within, and that the most powerful transformation starts not in the world around us, but in the words we speak to ourselves.

Because when we change our inner voice from “*You can’t*” to “*You can,*”

we don’t just change our mindset — we change our entire life.

REAL-WORLD LESSONS ON OVERCOMING NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

HOW INNER VOICE SHAPES THE JOURNEY TO THE NEXT BEST VERSION (NBV)

Every person’s NBV journey begins inside—not with achievements, but with awareness.

It starts when we listen to our inner voice and realize that the stories we tell ourselves are shaping who we become.

Even the most successful people in the world have battled negative self-talk. What sets them apart is not perfection, but the decision to retrain their inner dialogue to serve growth, courage, and purpose.

Here's how some of the world's most remarkable individuals transformed their self-talk, and how it led them toward their *Next Best Version*.

1. Oprah Winfrey: From “I Am Not Enough” To “I Am Worthy”

Oprah's early life was marked by poverty, abuse, and rejection. For years, her inner voice whispered words of unworthiness.

But as she grew, she made a conscious choice to rewrite that script. Through affirmations, gratitude, and spiritual reflection, Oprah began telling herself a new story—one rooted in self-worth and possibility.

That shift changed everything. Her inner transformation gave her the confidence to step into leadership, to build empathy, and to uplift millions through her voice.

NBV Connection:

Oprah's NBV wasn't about fame or success; it was about reclaiming her inner dialogue. By choosing self-belief over self-blame, she unlocked her Next Best Version—one driven by purpose, compassion, and authenticity.

“You become what you believe.” – Oprah Winfrey

2. Michael Jordan: From Rejection To Resilience

When Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team, his self-talk turned harsh: *“Maybe I'm not good enough.”*

But instead of surrendering to that voice, he chose to challenge it. Jordan began using his disappointment as motivation, turning his inner critic into a coach.

Each failure became fuel. Each mistake became a lesson. His inner voice evolved from *“You failed”* to *“You're learning.”*

NBV Connection:

Jordan's NBV emerged when he shifted from self-criticism to self-commitment. He discovered that greatness is not about avoiding failure; it's about training your inner voice to stay focused, determined, and resilient even when you fall.

"I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed." – Michael Jordan

3. J.K. Rowling: From Self-Doubt To Creative Power

Before Harry Potter, J.K. Rowling faced rejection after rejection. As a struggling single mother, her inner voice often said, *"You'll never make it."*

But she didn't let that voice silence her imagination. Instead, she began writing for herself—not for approval. Each story she wrote became a quiet act of defiance against her self-doubt.

Through storytelling, she built a new internal narrative: one of courage, persistence, and faith.

NBV Connection:

Rowling's NBV came alive when she stopped believing her inner critic and started believing her creative truth. She learned that the voice of fear loses power when we keep creating, despite it.

"Rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life."

– J.K. Rowling

4. Nelson Mandela: From Inner Anger To Inner Freedom

During 27 years of imprisonment, Nelson Mandela's greatest battle wasn't just against injustice; it was against his own inner turmoil.

He could have easily let anger and bitterness dominate his self-talk. But instead, he chose forgiveness, reflection, and inner peace.

By mastering his thoughts, Mandela turned confinement into preparation. His inner freedom paved the way for outer liberation.

NBV Connection:

Mandela's NBV was not achieved after his release; it was forged in his inner silence. His transformation reminds us that the *Next Best Version* of ourselves begins not with changing circumstances, but with changing the voice within.

"I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul."

— Nelson Mandela

5. Serena Williams: From Criticism To Confidence

Serena Williams faced years of public criticism about her body, temperament, and identity in a sport that didn't always accept her.

It would have been easy to internalize that negativity. Instead, she built a strong inner dialogue: *"I belong here. I am powerful. I am enough."*

Her self-talk became her armour and her compass.

NBV Connection:

Serena's NBV is rooted in unshakeable self-belief. She shows that when your inner voice stands firm, no external criticism can break you. Her story reminds us that your worth is defined by your own voice, not others' opinions.

"You have to believe in yourself when no one else does—that's what makes you a winner." — Serena Williams

6. Steve Jobs: From Failure To Reinvention

When Steve Jobs was fired from Apple, his inner dialogue could have turned into bitterness and blame.

Instead, he reframed the experience as freedom: a chance to begin again, and to rediscover creativity.

That new perspective changed his entire journey. It led him to create Pixar, NeXT, and eventually to return to Apple with a renewed vision and maturity.

NBV Connection:

Jobs' NBV emerged when he stopped defining himself by external validation and started listening to his creative voice again. His story reminds us that the *Next Best Version* often begins right after our biggest setback, when we choose self-trust over self-pity.

"Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith."

- Steve Jobs

THE INNER VOICE AND THE NBV CONNECTION

All these stories share a simple truth:

The *Next Best Version* (NBV) of you begins with the Next Best Conversation you have with yourself.

Every time you challenge a harsh thought, every time you replace doubt with belief, you move one step closer to that next version.

Oprah, Jordan, Rowling, Mandela, Serena, and Jobs didn't wait for perfect conditions—they retrained their inner voice to become their greatest ally.

Their stories prove that:

Your inner dialogue shapes your destiny.

Your self-talk determines your possibilities.

Your *Next Best Version* begins not with doing more, but with believing differently.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Your inner voice shapes your Next Best Version (NBV)

1. Awareness is the first step

You can't change what you don't notice.

Becoming conscious of your inner dialogue — especially when it turns critical — is the foundation of growth. Awareness turns automatic thoughts into choices.

2. Practice self-compassion, not self-criticism

Talk to yourself as you would to a close friend.

Self-compassion calms the inner critic, rebuilds confidence, and creates emotional safety for growth.

It's not weakness; it's the root of resilience.

3. Reframe and challenge negative thoughts

When a negative thought arises ("I can't," "I'm not enough"), question it. Ask, "Is this true?" or "What would a kinder version say?"

Replacing fear with curiosity rewires the brain toward possibility.

4. Surround yourself with positivity

Energy is contagious. When you spend time with supportive, uplifting people, your inner voice learns to mirror their optimism. Your environment either feeds your self-doubt or fuels your self-worth.

5. Use positive affirmations daily

Your words shape your world.

Start your day with affirmations like:

"I am learning."

"I am capable."

"I am becoming my next best version."

Affirmations help reprogram your inner dialogue to align with self-belief.

6. Turn your inner critic into an inner coach

Your goal isn't to silence your inner voice, but to retrain it.

Let that voice guide, motivate, and encourage you.

Over time, your inner coach will become your greatest ally in the NBV journey.

THE NBV INSIGHT

“The Next Best Version of you begins with the Next Best Conversation you have with yourself.”

Silencing the inner critic frees energy for action; to sustain that action we must cultivate resilience. The next chapter shows how to rise again.

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CHAPTER 10:

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

THE ART OF BOUNCING BACK

"Life doesn't get easier or more forgiving; we get stronger and more resilient." — Steve Maraboli

Adversity is an inevitable part of life. It comes unannounced, often when we feel least prepared. Like that one relative who always shows up uninvited, you can't avoid it, but you can learn to deal with it. Building resilience is the key not only to surviving challenges but to thriving in the face of them.

Resilience is more than toughness; it is adaptability, resourcefulness, and proactivity. It is the ability to absorb shocks, adjust to change, and recover stronger than before. In a rapidly changing world, resilience is the difference between stagnation and growth.

THE RESILIENCE FORMULA

Resilience is often seen as an inner strength some people are born with, but in truth, it is a skill one that grows through awareness, practice, and deliberate effort. At its core, resilience is the capacity to stay grounded when adversity strikes, remain flexible when uncertainty rises, and be wise enough to release what no longer contributes to your growth.

This chapter introduces a simple yet transformational formula that captures the heart of resilience:

RESILIENCE = ABILITY TO ADOPT + ABILITY TO ADAPT + ABILITY TO ABORT

These three abilities form the foundation of emotional endurance, mental agility, and continuous personal evolution.

1. ADOPT

The power to accept, anchor, and align.

Adopt is the first and most foundational step of resilience. To adopt means embracing the truth of your situation and aligning yourself with the mindset needed to overcome it. It is adopting reality, responsibility, and a renewed way of thinking that strengthens you instead of weakening you.

Adopt means:

- Accepting reality without resistance or denial.
- Acknowledging emotions honestly, but not letting them dictate your actions.
- Taking ownership of your behaviour and responses during adversity.
- Allowing difficult experiences to shape your wisdom, not your wounds.
- Adopting new ways of thinking that support growth rather than fear.
- Adopting best practices, better habits, and proven strategies that move you forward.
- Adopting the mindset and commitment required for your *Next Best Version*.

You cannot navigate what you refuse to acknowledge.

Adopt is the grounding step—the moment you stand centered and say,

“This is where I am, this is what it is, and this is who I choose to become next.”

2. ADAPT

The ability to shift, stretch, and grow.

Adaptation is where resilience truly becomes visible. This is the art of adjusting your approach, reframing your thinking, and evolving strategies when old ones no longer work. If adopt is accepting the situation, adapt is responding creatively to it.

Adapt means:

- Reframing problems through a fresh, empowered lens.
- Adjusting behaviours, expectations, and strategies.
- Staying flexible, curious, and open to alternatives.
- Transforming adversity into forward momentum.

Adaptation is growth in motion.

It is the trait that turns obstacles into opportunities and setbacks into stepping stones.

3. ABORT

The courage to let go.

Abort is the most misunderstood—yet most liberating—dimension of resilience. It is the ability to let go of what no longer serves you: out-dated beliefs, limiting patterns, draining relationships, or identities you've outgrown.

Abort means:

- Unlearning old thinking that keeps you stuck.
- Releasing emotional burdens and rigid expectations.
- Ending commitments, habits, or narratives that hinder growth.
- Creating space for reinvention, clarity, and renewed purpose.

Letting go is not giving up; it is choosing not to carry unnecessary weight on your journey to the *Next Best Version* of yourself.

WHY THIS FORMULA MATTERS

This formula isn't just a framework; it is a powerful roadmap for emotional balance, mental clarity, and future-readiness.

When you adopt, you stay grounded.

When you adapt, you grow.

When you abort, you evolve.

Together, they form a resilience system that helps you respond with intention instead of reacting with fear—no matter what life throws your way.



THE EIGHT RS OF RESILIENCE (NBV FRAMEWORK)

Your Inner Spiral for Rising, Evolving, and Becoming Your Next Best Version.

Resilience is not just a response to adversity; it is a continuous inner journey of becoming. In the NBV philosophy, resilience is the ability to rise forward, not merely bounce back.

To support this lifelong evolution, here are the 8Rs of Resilience, a holistic NBV model that guides you through reflection, growth, reinforcement, and renewal.

These Rs are not steps—they are a cycle, a living loop you keep returning to as you grow into each *Next Best Version* of yourself.

1. REVISIT – RETURN TO YOUR JOURNEY WITH AWARENESS.

Once you reach a certain stage of your NBV, it is important to periodically revisit where you stand. Life moves fast, experiences accumulate, and your inner landscape shifts. Revisiting helps you pause and assess:

- Who have I become?
- What have I learned?
- What is working, and what is not?
- What needs attention, healing, or strengthening?

Revisiting reconnects you with your truth and prevents you from living on autopilot.

2. REDEFINE – SHAPE THE NEXT CHAPTER OF YOUR NBV

After revisiting, the next step is to redefine your direction.

NBV is a journey, not a destination—each version of you eventually invites the next.

Redefining means:

- Updating your goals
- Raising your standards
- Clarifying who you want to become next
- Letting go of out-dated expectations

Redefinition turns reflection into intention.

3. RESONATE – LET THE NEXT VERSION OF YOU BE FELT, NOT JUST THOUGHT

Change becomes real only when it resonates emotionally.

Resonance creates the internal pull that moves you from wanting to become better... to needing to become better.

To resonate means:

- Feeling the urgency for growth
- Connecting deeply with your purpose
- Allowing your inner voice to become louder than your fears
- Letting your NBV vision “sit in your heart”

When something resonates, you don’t forget it—it lives within you.

4. REGISTER – ENGRAVE IT INTO YOUR MIND; PROGRAM YOUR INTENTION

Once your NBV goal resonates, you must register it—seal it into your mental operating system.

Register means:

- Mentally programming your new intentions
- Creating strong internal reminders
- Encoding the belief that “*This is who I am becoming*”
- Transforming insight into identity

When you register something, it becomes part of you—not a temporary motivation.

5. REMIND – BRING YOUR NBV BACK INTO DAILY AWARENESS

Growth fades when we forget it. Resilience strengthens when we remind ourselves consistently.

Remind means:

- Keeping your NBV goals visible
- Repeating affirmations
- Reconnecting with your why
- Staying mindful of the behaviours that reflect your next version

Reminders keep your NBV alive in the middle of life's chaos.

6. RETROSPECT – LOOK BACK WITH HONESTY, NOT JUDGMENT

Retrospection is the art of reviewing your actions, responses, and patterns without criticism, guilt, or regret.

It helps you:

- Learn from mistakes
- Understand triggers
- Identify progress
- Decode setbacks

Retrospect transforms experiences into wisdom.

7. REFLECT – SIT WITH THE LEARNING UNTIL CLARITY EMERGES.

Reflection goes deeper than retrospection.

Retrospection analyses; reflection internalizes.

Reflection means:

- Allowing insights to sink in

- Understanding what life is teaching you
- Feeling the emotional truth behind your experiences
- Making meaning from adversity

Reflection is where growth becomes maturity.

8. REWARD

Celebrate progress—it fuels resilience.

Most people forget this step, but you must reward yourself for:

- Showing up
- Trying again
- Bouncing back
- Growing, even when it's tough
- Becoming your *Next Best Version* bit by bit

Rewarding yourself reinforces positive behaviour and strengthens your resilience muscle.

A small celebration can create a big shift in energy and motivation.

THE EIGHT RS AS A RESILIENCE LOOP

REVISIT → REDEFINE → RESONATE → REGISTER → REMIND → RETROSPECT → REFLECT → REWARD → (back to REVISIT)

These eight Rs create a powerful loop:

- Revisit gives awareness
- Redefine gives direction
- Resonate gives emotional fire
- Register gives programming
- Remind gives consistency

- Retrospect gives learning
- Reflect gives wisdom
- Reward gives energy

Together, they form a powerful resilience system that supports your journey toward the *Next Best Version* of yourself.

REAL-LIFE RESILIENCE STORIES

J.K. Rowling: Once a single mother living on welfare, Rowling faced repeated rejections before her *Harry Potter* series was published. Her perseverance transformed her into one of the world's most successful authors.

Stephen Hawking: Diagnosed with a terminal illness at age 21, Hawking defied all odds, contributing profoundly to science for more than 50 years.

These stories highlight that resilience is often the deciding factor between giving up and achieving greatness.

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Resilience is critical not only for individuals but also for organizations. A resilient workforce is more adaptable, innovative, and productive. Gallup research shows that resilient employees:

- Experience higher levels of well-being
- Maintain strong interpersonal relationships
- Adapt effectively to change
- Exhibit higher productivity and engagement

How organizations can foster resilience:

1. **Supportive culture:** Encourage open communication, recognize achievements, and normalize seeking help.

2. **Resources for stress management:** Provide mental health support, training, and wellness programs.
3. **Learning environment:** Promote continuous learning and encourage experimentation without fear of failure.
4. **Role models:** Leaders should model resilience by demonstrating composure, adaptability, and problem-solving in adversity.

RESILIENCE AS A LIFE SKILL

Resilience is not innate; it is cultivated through deliberate practice and mindset shifts:

- **Mindset:** Cultivate optimism and focus on solutions rather than problems.
- **Self-care:** Prioritize physical, mental, and emotional well-being to maintain energy during adversity.
- **Learning orientation:** Treat failures and setbacks as opportunities for growth and skill development.
- **Goal-setting:** Clear, meaningful goals provide direction and motivation during difficult times.
- **Gratitude and reflection:** Regularly reflect on achievements and positive experiences to reinforce emotional strength.

By making resilience a life skill, individuals are better equipped to navigate uncertainty and emerge stronger.

Resilience is both an art and a science. It is the backbone of personal achievement, organizational effectiveness, and societal progress. Real-world examples, from J.K. Rowling to Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, illustrate that resilience is not about avoiding challenges but about facing them head-on, learning from them, and emerging stronger.

Building resilience is a conscious choice—a commitment to absorb shocks, adapt to change, recover, and thrive. In an unpredictable

world, those who master resilience are not just survivors; they are leaders, innovators, and agents of positive change

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

I've faced my fair share of adversity: setbacks in my career, personal struggles, and moments when life seemed determined to test my limits. Resilience, I've learned, is not about being immune to challenges; it's about the ability to bounce back. Life's true tests rarely occur in good times; they happen when we are forced to confront uncertainty, risk, and failure.

From school to graduation choices, affordability of education, and professional risks, life constantly presented challenges. Each setback became a lesson in perseverance. I learned that a true leader evolves not during times of ease, but while navigating tough situations.

Many of the risks I took didn't immediately pay off. I failed numerous times. Yet, like a phoenix, I was reborn after each failure. I realized that to succeed, you must be like a rubber ball—able to bounce back—rather than a hard, rigid ball that shatters under pressure. Similarly, I liken resilience to being like a horse instead of an elephant: when a horse falls, it rises quickly and starts running again; an elephant takes much longer to recover. To remind myself of the essence of resilience, I often connect it to “*Rest of your Life Bounce Back*” (Res-Lie-Nce).

THE ROLE OF SELF-CARE

One of the most important lessons I've learned is the critical role of self-care. Taking care of my physical, emotional, and mental well-being has helped me build the strength to navigate adversity. Self-care is not indulgence—it is an investment in yourself. Prioritizing my well-being allows me to remain focused, energized, and ready to face challenges. Without this foundation, resilience is much harder to maintain.

THE POWER OF SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Resilience is not purely an individual endeavor. A strong support network of family, friends, mentors, and colleagues has been essential. Their encouragement, perspective, and emotional support remind me that resilience is strengthened through connection.

BUILDING RESILIENCE: A PROCESS

I've discovered that resilience develops in stages. The flow I follow is:

Need → Believe → Practice → Skill → Continuous Action → Habit → Character

1. **Need:** Recognize the importance of resilience.
2. **Believe:** Trust in your ability to overcome challenges.
3. **Practice:** Take small steps, face fears, and embrace discomfort.
4. **Skill:** Develop resilience as a learnable skill.
5. **Continuous Action:** Apply it consistently in daily life.
6. **Habit:** Make resilient behaviour automatic.
7. **Character:** Let resilience define who you are.

Through this progression, resilience becomes part of your identity rather than just a temporary response to hardship.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Embrace failure:** Every setback is an opportunity to learn and grow.
- **Focus on strengths:** Leverage your unique abilities when faced with challenges.
- **Take calculated risks:** Avoid letting fear prevent progress.
- **Face fears with courage:** Growth lies beyond your comfort zone.

- **View challenges as opportunities:** Resilience transforms obstacles into stepping stones.

MY RESILIENCE IN A NUTSHELL

Life has tested me countless times—from school struggles to career setbacks and personal challenges. Each obstacle taught me that resilience isn't about avoiding hardship; it's about bouncing back stronger.

I've learned to be like a rubber ball, not a hard ball—able to absorb impact and rebound quickly. I also remind myself to be like a horse, not an elephant: when a horse falls, it gets up and runs again.

Self-care has been my anchor. Prioritizing my physical, mental, and emotional well-being has helped me face challenges with energy and focus. At the same time, my support network—family, friends, and mentors—has been a source of strength, teaching me that resilience grows through connection.

I follow a simple flow to build resilience:

Need → Believe → Practice → Skill → Continuous Action → Habit
→ Character

Every challenge I've faced has strengthened me, reshaped my perspective, and reinforced the truth that resilience is not just bouncing back—it's growing, evolving, and thriving.

Resilience is a lifelong journey of growth, learning, and self-improvement. By prioritizing self-care, nurturing strong support networks, taking calculated risks, and focusing on your strengths, you can cultivate resilience. Each challenge you face is an opportunity to grow stronger, wiser, and more capable of achieving your goals.

When you embrace resilience, you're not just bouncing back, you're evolving, preparing to thrive in an unpredictable world, and shaping the person you aspire to become.

“Resilience is not about bouncing back—it’s about rising forward with deeper wisdom.” — CPP

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Building Resilience In The Face Of Adversity

1. Resilience is a Skill, Not a Gift

Resilience isn’t something people are born with — it is built through awareness, practice, and intentional effort.

2. The Resilience Formula: Adopt → Adapt → Abort

Adopt — Accept reality, anchor yourself, and take ownership.

Adapt — Adjust your mindset, behaviors, and strategies.

Abort — Let go of what no longer serves your growth.

3. The 8 Rs of Resilience Form a Continuous Loop

Revisit → Redefine → Resonate → Register → Remind → Retrospect → Reflect → Reward

This loop helps you rise forward with clarity, wisdom, and emotional strength.

4. Challenges are Not Setbacks — They are Stepping Stones

Adversity offers opportunities to learn, evolve, and grow stronger.

5. Self-Care is the Foundation of Resilience

Physical, emotional, and mental well-being fuel your ability to bounce back.

6. Support Systems Strengthen Your Resilience

Family, friends, mentors, and colleagues create a network that carries you through difficult phases.

7. Organizations Thrive with Resilient People

Resilient workplaces are adaptable, innovative, and collaborative.

8. Real Stories Reinforce Real Strength

Examples like J.K. Rowling and Stephen Hawking show that resilience can transform adversity into extraordinary impact.

Next Step on Your NBV Path

Resilience steadies the spirit, but growth also needs the right company—next, we’ll learn how surrounding yourself with good people strengthens your NBV.

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SECTION 3

BUILDING A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR NBV

CHAPTER 11:

POWER OF SURROUNDING YOURSELF WITH GOOD PEOPLE

“The people you walk with often decide how far you go.” — CPP

In our pursuit of growth and self-improvement, we often focus on skills, goals, and strategies—but overlook one of the most powerful forces shaping our lives: the people we surround ourselves with.

Our relationships act as mirrors, amplifiers, and anchors. They reflect back to us our values and flaws, amplify our strengths or weaknesses, and anchor us either in progress or stagnation. The truth is no one achieves greatness alone. Whether in family, business, sports, or community, success is always co-authored.

As Jim Rohn famously said, *“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.”*

The company we keep influences not only our mindset and confidence but also our resilience in the face of adversity.

The Harvard Study of Adult Development, one of the longest-running studies on human happiness and fulfillment, reinforces this truth: the quality of our relationships is the single strongest predictor of long-term health, happiness, and success. Positive, uplifting connections help us thrive mentally, emotionally, and physically.

This makes it essential to build a circle of positive, like-minded individuals who inspire us to grow, challenge us to improve, and support us through setbacks.

THE DASH PRINCIPLE

To simplify what we should look for in people—and how we can show up for others—I developed the DASH Principle. The people

around us should embody four key traits: Dependability, Availability, Simplicity, and Humanity.

1. DEPENDABLE

Dependability is about trust. Dependable people keep their word, show up when needed, and take responsibility for their actions. They form the foundation of strong relationships because we know we can count on them in both calm and crisis.

Context: In a world of uncertainty, dependable people are like anchors. They bring stability, allowing us to take risks, explore new paths, and still feel secure.

Example: A dependable mentor who guides you consistently builds stability and confidence, helping you leap into the unknown knowing someone has your back. In business, leaders have often acknowledged the role of mentors and trustworthy colleagues. Their reliability gives them the strength to persist against systemic barriers.

How to Apply: Audit your circle. Do the people around you keep promises? Do they follow through? More importantly, ask yourself: Am I dependable to others? Trust is reciprocal—you attract dependability by practicing it.

2. AVAILABLE

Availability is about presence, not proximity. It's not about always being there physically—it's about being emotionally present, attentive, and responsive.

Context: Modern life often glorifies busyness. But availability signals care and respect. A person who truly listens can transform how we process challenges and solutions.

Example: In organizations, leaders who are approachable and available foster psychological safety. Employees feel valued when leaders make space for them. This leads to innovation, loyalty, and higher performance. Consider Satya Nadella's leadership at

Microsoft—his emphasis on empathy and availability reshaped the culture, making employees feel heard and supported.

How to Apply: Cultivate relationships with people who create time and space when it matters most. And in turn, be available for those who lean on you. Availability builds a cycle of respect and reciprocity.

3. SIMPLE

Simplicity in relationships means authenticity. Simple people are genuine, transparent, and straightforward. They do not wear masks, manipulate, or complicate.

Context: Complexity in relationships—drama, manipulation, and pretences—drains energy and clouds decision-making. Simplicity creates clarity, trust, and focus.

Example: Successful organisations are built with compelling mission and people with high sense of belongingness who believed in affordable innovation. By keeping relationships and values simple, leaders scaled trust across partners and customers

How to Apply: Avoid draining relationships that thrive on games or ego. Seek authenticity. Practice it yourself—speak truthfully, admit mistakes, and let your words align with your values. When you are simple, you attract simplicity.

4. HUMAN

Humanity is the heart of meaningful connections. It's about empathy, compassion, and kindness. Human people remind us that perfection is not required; presence and care are.

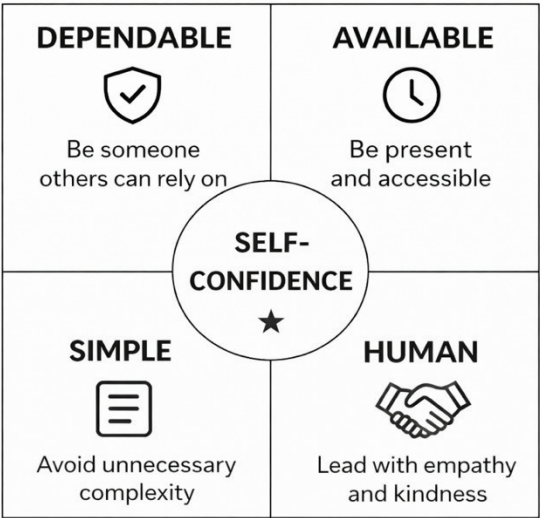
Context: True humanity shines in moments of vulnerability. People who are human validate your struggles, celebrate your wins, and stand by you without judgment.

Example: Organizations that emphasize humanity—leaders who care about employees as individuals—build lasting loyalty. During the pandemic, some companies supported their people through

empathy-driven initiatives, not just financial aid. This showed employees that they weren't “resources” but humans.

How to Apply: Surround yourself with those who uplift, not tear down. Prioritize kindness over criticism. And remember—it's not just about finding human people, but being one.

DASH FRAMEWORK



THE IMPACT OF THE DASH PRINCIPLE

When we intentionally build relationships around the DASH principle, we unlock transformative benefits:

- **Support in adversity:** Dependable and available people reduce stress and build resilience.
- **Confidence:** Encouragement from supportive people helps us take risks and grow.
- **Clarity:** Simplicity in relationships reduces drama and enables honest decision-making.
- **Resilience:** Humanity—empathy and kindness—buffers against stress and isolation.

These qualities not only nurture personal growth but also enhance professional impact. Leaders who surround themselves with DASH-driven teams inspire innovation, build collaboration, and sustain high performance.

THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Positive relationships go beyond comfort—they are catalysts for growth. They encourage us to:

- Dream bigger.
- Push boundaries.
- Pursue passions we might otherwise abandon.

When people believe in us, we are far more likely to take bold steps and embrace challenges. On the other hand, negative or toxic relationships drain energy, fuel self-doubt, and limit potential.

Curating your circle is not selfish—it's essential.

THE LINK BETWEEN RELATIONSHIPS AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

Confidence doesn't grow in isolation—it thrives in the company of those who affirm us, challenge us constructively, and celebrate our progress. Positive circles create a feedback loop of encouragement and accountability.

As you walk the journey to your NBV, remember: self-confidence is amplified by the confidence others invest in you.

When we forget our own strength, positive people remind us of our worth.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I reflect on my journey, I realize that the people we choose to surround ourselves with play a monumental role in shaping our growth—both personally and professionally. One piece of wisdom that has stayed with me over the years comes from a mentor: “*You*

are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” This simple yet profound advice became a guiding principle in my life.

In my early experiences, I struggled to find the right people to surround myself with. I often trusted individuals without fully understanding their intentions or values, only to discover later that they weren’t the right fit for me. At the same time, I missed opportunities to connect with positive, inspiring people because I hadn’t yet learned how to recognize them.

A turning point came when I realized that attracting the right people begins with being the right person myself. I focused on cultivating positivity within myself—thinking positively, behaving positively, and acting positively—without expecting anything in return. I learned that positive energy has a magnetic quality: it draws the right people into your life and even transforms the negative energy around you.

As I embraced this approach, the change was remarkable. Positive, inspiring people began entering my life, offering support, guidance, and motivation. I discovered that by nurturing my energy and mindset, I could also influence others—helping them grow through counselling, mentoring, coaching, and simply being a reliable friend and colleague. Over time, this created a network of relationships that empowered me to continually evolve.

Surrounding myself with positive people has been crucial in helping me find my *Next Best Version* (NBV). Their experiences, stories, and perspectives inspired me to push beyond my limits, face challenges with courage, and adopt a growth mindset. Through these relationships, I learned to view setbacks as opportunities for growth and to remain focused on my goals even in the face of adversity.

The impact of these positive relationships has been profound. They have provided support when I needed guidance, offered motivation when I felt stuck, and given me a sense of community and belonging. Most importantly, they reinforced the lesson that personal growth is

intertwined with the people we engage with and the energy we bring into those interactions.

Reflecting on this journey, I now understand that finding the right people requires patience, discernment, and intentionality. It's okay to distance yourself from those who don't align with your values or support your growth. At the same time, being a positive, energetic, and proactive individual naturally attracts those who will inspire you, challenge you, and help you become the best version of yourself.

By focusing on positivity and cultivating meaningful connections, I have been able to navigate life's challenges, grow as a person, and continue on the path of discovering my *Next Best Version*. This journey has shown me that surrounding yourself with the right people isn't just a strategy—it's a way of life that shapes who you are and who you can become.

Throughout my journey, I have realized that the people we surround ourselves with—mentors, leaders, peers, and friends—play a crucial role in shaping who we are and who we can become. The wisdom, energy, and values of those around us can profoundly influence our mindset, growth, and ability to navigate challenges.

One lesson that has stayed with me is a simple yet powerful insight shared by a mentor early in my career: *"You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with."* This taught me the importance of consciously choosing the people I allow into my life and learning from their experiences, mindset, and behaviour.

THE POWER OF LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS

When we align ourselves with like-minded people, we gain a sense of belonging, purpose, and inspiration. Leaders and peers who share our values and passions create an environment where growth and excellence are encouraged. From observing and interacting with such individuals, I learned that they provide:

- **Motivation and Inspiration:** Seeing their dedication and perseverance encourages us to set higher goals, embrace challenges, and stay focused.
- **Support and Guidance:** Mentors and colleagues help us navigate difficult decisions, offering perspective and experience-based advice.
- **New Perspectives and Ideas:** Engaging with people who think similarly yet differently sparks creativity, challenges assumptions, and helps us innovate.
- **A Sense of Community and Belonging:** Being part of a supportive network builds trust, reduces stress, and reinforces resilience.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND ME

I also learned practical strategies from observing leaders and peers who successfully cultivate strong, positive relationships:

- **Seek People Who Share Your Values and Passions:** Leaders around me emphasized the importance of building connections on shared principles. This creates authenticity and alignment in interactions.
- **Be Intentional About the Company You Keep:** I noticed that successful individuals are deliberate in choosing relationships that nurture growth, positivity, and learning.
- **Cultivate Simplicity and Availability:** Leaders model consistent engagement, making themselves approachable and creating open channels for support and mentorship.
- **Practice Active Listening and Empathy:** Observing empathetic leaders taught me that understanding others deeply strengthens relationships and fosters trust.

- **Show Appreciation and Gratitude:** Recognizing the efforts, guidance, and achievements of others builds strong, positive connections and encourages mutual growth.

THE IMPACT ON MY JOURNEY

By applying these lessons, I have been able to surround myself with people who inspire me to pursue my *Next Best Version* (NBV). Positive energy and like-minded individuals have helped me:

- Grow and develop as a person through shared experiences and insights.
- Overcome challenges and setbacks with guidance and encouragement from others.
- Adopt a growth mindset by seeing obstacles as opportunities for learning and improvement.

Through leaders and people around me, I have learned that personal and professional growth is deeply intertwined with the energy, mindset, and values of those we interact with. Positive relationships are not just supportive—they are transformative, helping us unlock our potential and continually evolve into the best versions of ourselves.

“While simplicity in relationships nurtures trust, simplicity in thought transforms growth itself—a shift we’ll explore deeply in Chapter 21.”

In nurturing relationships grounded in dependability, availability, simplicity, and humanity, we not only grow—we create the foundation for transformative mentorship, which is where our next chapter begins.

“Authenticity keeps relationships grounded. When people are genuine and transparent, trust flows easily. In relationships, simplicity is not about minimalism—it’s about clarity and honesty.”

— CPP

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. The DASH Principle (Dependable, Available, Simple, Human)

This framework helps identify people who make a meaningful difference in your personal and professional life.

2. Who you surround yourself with shapes who you become

Positive, like-minded individuals inspire growth, confidence, and self-improvement.

3. Positive relationships drive growth and resilience

Surrounding yourself with people who share your values and passions creates a sense of belonging, purpose, and fulfillment. These relationships provide motivation, inspiration, and empowerment.

4. Negative relationships hold you back

Be mindful and intentional about the company you keep. Curate your circle thoughtfully to protect your energy and focus.

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CHAPTER 12:

CREATING A POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." – Nelson Mandela

A positive and supportive environment is the invisible yet powerful ecosystem that shapes how we think, feel, and grow. Whether at home, work, or within communities, our surroundings influence our energy, mindset, and ability to thrive. We become mirrors of the environment we inhabit—absorbing its tone, beliefs, and culture.

Every conversation we engage in, every team we belong to, and every circle we move through either uplifts or drains us. A healthy environment doesn't happen by chance; it's intentionally cultivated. It's the fertile ground where optimism replaces cynicism, encouragement replaces criticism, and collaboration replaces competition.

The truth is even the most talented individuals can wither in toxic surroundings. On the other hand, ordinary people can achieve extraordinary results when nurtured in a positive, trust-filled space. Our environment can be our greatest accelerator—or our quietest saboteur.

WHY A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

A positive and supportive environment acts as an emotional safety net and a growth catalyst. It allows people to be authentic, express ideas without fear, and find purpose in what they do.

Research consistently shows that environments built on trust, recognition, and empathy are not only more productive but also more

innovative. They enhance psychological safety—a sense of freedom to take risks, share failures, and grow from them.

For individuals, such an environment builds resilience.

For teams, it builds cohesion.

For organizations, it builds culture.

When we intentionally design our environment—our home, workplace, and social spaces—we design the atmosphere for transformation.

Our *Next Best Version* isn't a destination. It is a ripple—a movement.

“And when one person evolves, everyone around them evolves in some way too” — CPP

CREATING A POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT: STRATEGIES

1. Foster Positivity:

Celebrate achievements, recognize effort, and share positive stories to inspire motivation and engagement. Simple gestures—verbal appreciation, thank-you notes, or shout-outs—create ripple effects that uplift morale.

Example: Zappos built a culture of joy and recognition that drives extraordinary customer and employee loyalty.

2. Encourage Open Communication:

Transparency and honest dialogue are the lifeblood of supportive environments. Providing safe spaces for sharing ideas and feedback builds trust and encourages collaboration.

Example: Pixar's “Braintrust” sessions encourage candid input from all levels, sparking creativity and innovation.

3. Prioritize Work-Life Balance:

Supporting balance between work and personal life is key to sustainability and well-being.

Example: Scandinavian firms model flexibility and parental support, showing that balance breeds loyalty and creativity.

4. Practice Empathy and Support:

Empathy strengthens human connection. Leaders and peers who actively listen and encourage others create an ecosystem of care and respect.

Example: Patagonia's people-first approach results in passionate, purpose-driven teams.

5. Lead by Example:

Leadership shapes culture. When leaders model integrity, optimism, and humility, they give permission for authenticity to flourish.

Example: Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw demonstrates that inclusive, compassionate leadership drives both innovation and belonging.

6. Cultivate Meaningful Relationships:

Surround yourself with dependable, like-minded people who amplify growth and purpose. A culture of connection multiplies creativity, motivation, and fulfillment.

Example: Google's 20% rule encourages shared learning and empowerment, showing that community fuels innovation.

CREATING A POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIES



1. FOSTER POSITIVITY

Celebrate achievements, recognize effort, and share positive stories to uplift.



2. ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Promote transparency, honest dialogue, and safe spaces for sharing ideas.



3. PRIORITIZE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Support balance between work, rest, and personal life.



4. PRACTICE EMPATHY AND SUPPORT

Listen actively, encourage others, and foster care and respect.



5. LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Model integrity, optimism, and humility in your actions.



6. CULTIVATE MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Build connections with like-minded and dependable people.

THE IMPACT OF A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT ON OUR WELL-BEING

A positive environment is not just a productivity booster—it's a well-being multiplier.

- **Emotional Health:**

Supportive surroundings reduce anxiety, strengthen emotional stability, and enhance optimism. People feel valued and seen, nurturing self-esteem and confidence.

- **Physical Health:**

Studies reveal that individuals in positive work or family environments experience lower stress levels, better immunity, and improved sleep quality.

- **Social Health:**

Environments rich in trust and empathy deepen relationships and reduce loneliness—a major predictor of mental decline and burnout.

- **Purpose and Fulfillment:**

Being part of a positive environment connects us to something larger than ourselves. It ignites purpose, creativity, and meaning—fuel for the *Next Best Version* (NBV) of who we are becoming.

A supportive environment, therefore, is not a luxury. It is a necessity for holistic growth—a space where both individuals and communities can flourish in mind, body, and spirit.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

Looking back at my life, I’ve come to understand something fundamental: becoming the *Next Best Version* (NBV) of ourselves is never a solo pursuit. It begins within us, yes—with mindset, intention, and inner clarity—but it becomes truly powerful only when it expands beyond the boundaries of the self. Growth becomes transformational when it evolves from a private practice into a shared experience.

Early in my career, I worked in environments where people showed up, did their jobs, and returned home... disconnected. Talent was extraordinary, yet something was missing—an invisible heaviness in the air. Conversations were transactional. Creativity felt constrained. People moved like islands, guarded, careful not to reveal too much.

It wasn’t lack of knowledge or skill holding us back; it was the absence of emotional connection. No one felt truly seen. No one felt truly supported. Without support, possibility shrinks.

I didn’t have authority or a grand plan back then—just the intention to create something different. I began experimenting with small acts of humanity.

- A simple “thank you” after a meeting.
- A short message appreciating someone’s effort.
- A moment spent listening without judgment.

- Celebrating even the smallest wins publicly and enthusiastically.

At first, these gestures felt insignificant. But over time, I noticed shifts. Conversations became warmer. People started lifting each other up. Laughter returned. Collaboration moved from forced to natural. Creativity, once felt suffocated, began to breathe again.

What started as sparks of positivity slowly became the cultural oxygen of the team.

That's when I realized something life-changing: positivity is contagious, support is cyclical, and encouragement is regenerative.

The kindness we extend has a way of returning to us—sometimes quietly, sometimes unexpectedly—but always in a way that strengthens the whole.

This awakening didn't stay confined to the workplace. As I stepped into mentoring, coaching, and community work, I discovered the same truth repeating itself everywhere: people rise higher when the environment around them believes in their rise. When someone feels valued, they grow. When they grow, they inspire others. When they inspire others, the community transforms. And when the community transforms, each person within it experiences a deeper, more grounded version of themselves.

It was during these years that I also learned one of the most important lessons of my journey:

self-leadership is not a luxury—it is a responsibility.

You cannot build a nurturing environment around you if the environment within you is shaky, exhausted, or neglected.

Running, meditating, practicing yoga, journaling—these weren't just routines for me. They became grounding rituals that helped me stay clear, stable, and compassionate. They allowed me to show up with authenticity rather than obligation. Personal balance gave me the energy to hold space for others without losing myself.

Slowly, I began to see every group, every gathering, and every conversation as a potential micro-community—a circle where encouragement replaces competition, honesty replaces judgment, and people feel safe to bring not just their strengths, but vulnerabilities too.

Over time, I realized that building community is not about being at the center of attention; it's about helping others find their own center. Leadership is not a spotlight—it's a mirror that reflects the potential in others. It's the quiet act of lifting people from behind, not pulling them from the front.

Today, when I reflect on my journey, I see a consistent truth woven through every experience:

the environment you create within yourself defines the community you build around you.

- When your heart is anchored, you become an anchor for others.
- When you embody hope, you become a source of hope.
- When you commit to your NBV, you naturally help others move toward theirs.

This is why I now approach every space—professional, personal, or spiritual—with one intention:

to create communities of support where people don't just grow individually, but rise collectively.

Because in those rising circles, we discover something extraordinary: we don't become better alone—we become better together.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND ME

Observing leaders and peers reinforced critical principles for cultivating a supportive environment. Authentic, empathetic leadership drives engagement, collaboration, and resilience.

I have also learnt that :

- **Positivity Inspires Action:** Optimism and constructive attitudes encourage others to embrace challenges with confidence.
- **Open Communication Strengthens Trust:** Transparency fosters collaboration and better decision-making.
- **Supportive Relationships Accelerate Growth:** Dependable, like-minded peers provide motivation, perspective, and guidance.
- **Prioritizing Self-Care Sustains Leadership:** Maintaining well-being ensures energy, empathy, and effectiveness in supporting others.
- **Microsoft’s “Growth Mindset” Culture:** Satya Nadella transformed Microsoft by emphasizing learning, collaboration, and openness. Employees are encouraged to view challenges as opportunities for growth, and recognition is given for curiosity and effort, fostering engagement and innovation.
- **Salesforce’s “Ohana Culture”:** This culture emphasizes family-like support, where employees feel included, valued, and supported. Philanthropy, recognition, and mentorship programs strengthen bonds, boosting employee well-being and productivity.
- **IDEO’s Creative Environment:** IDEO fosters innovation by creating psychologically safe spaces for brainstorming and experimentation. Team members are encouraged to share ideas freely without fear of judgment, accelerating creativity and collaboration.

These examples show that intentional, positive, and supportive environments are critical for growth, innovation, and fulfillment.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Creating A Positive And Supportive Environment

1. Positivity

- Celebrate achievements and recognize effort.

- Share inspiring stories to uplift morale.

Example: Zappos emphasizes recognition and celebration to boost engagement.

2. Open Communication

- Encourage honest, transparent dialogue.
- Provide safe spaces for sharing ideas and feedback.

Example: Pixar's open communication culture sparks innovation across teams.

3. Support & Empathy

- Offer guidance, encouragement, and active listening.
- Cultivate mutual support that strengthens resilience.

Example: Salesforce's Ohana culture fosters inclusion, mentorship, and employee well-being.

4. Lead by Example

- Demonstrate integrity, optimism, and empathy.
- Your behavior sets the tone for the environment.

Example: Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw inspires innovation and collaboration through authentic leadership.

5. Work–Life Balance

- Prioritize self-care and encourage boundaries.
- A balanced environment enhances creativity, productivity, and focus.

6. Meaningful Relationships

- Surround yourself with dependable, like-minded individuals.
- Positive relationships provide guidance, motivation, and perspective.

Creating a positive and supportive environment is intentional. Positivity, communication, empathy, balance, leadership, and meaningful relationships are pillars that empower individuals and teams to thrive, innovate, and achieve their Next Best Version.

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CHAPTER 13:

THE ROLE OF MENTORS AND COACHES

IN ACHIEVING NBV

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn." – Benjamin Franklin

In the previous chapter, we explored the power of surrounding ourselves with positive, like-minded individuals—the DASH circle that shapes our growth. Building on that foundation, this chapter dives deeper into one of the most impactful relationships within that circle: mentorship and coaching.

While good people uplift us, mentors and coaches help us see the potential we often overlook in ourselves.

Achieving your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not a journey walked alone. Growth, self-discovery, and transformation require guidance, perspective, and support. Mentors and coaches provide the structure, insight, and encouragement to navigate challenges, recognize opportunities, and unlock potential that might otherwise remain hidden.

Early in my career, I faced moments of doubt. I remember sitting in my small room, staring at a pile of career options, wondering which path would define me. I had the ambition but lacked clarity. That's when I realized the value of mentors and coaches: people who could see beyond my self-imposed limitations and guide me toward possibilities I could not see on my own. One mentor's advice—*"Focus on what excites you, not what is expected of you"*—shifted my entire mindset. That simple insight allowed me to embrace risk, pursue opportunities with courage, and uncover strengths I didn't know I had.

THE POWER OF MENTORING

Mentors are experienced guides who offer wisdom, advice, and encouragement. Mentoring is mutually beneficial: mentees gain knowledge, skills, and confidence, while mentors refine leadership skills, empathy, and fulfillment through helping others grow.

I've had mentors who shaped me in ways both subtle and profound. One mentor, a woman leader I admired, pushed me to take on a challenging project I was hesitant to approach. I remember the anxiety and self-doubt that gripped me. Yet, her unwavering belief in my ability, coupled with practical advice, helped me succeed. That experience taught me that mentorship is not about giving answers but about enabling discovery and growth.

Mentoring can take many forms: life-skill mentors, subject matter experts, spiritual guides, financial advisors, peer mentors, and reverse mentors. Each offers unique perspectives, and collectively, they create a support system that nurtures growth on multiple levels.

The MENTOR Framework provides structure for mentoring relationships:

M – Meet: Establish connection and rapport.

E – Engage: Encourage active participation.

N – Negotiate: Collaborate on goals and expectations.

T – Trust: Build credibility and openness.

O – Objective: Set clear objectives.

R – Reflect: Review progress and provide feedback.

Following this framework transforms mentoring from advice-giving to a purposeful relationship that accelerates growth and instills confidence.

THE ROLE OF COACHING

Coaching complements mentoring by focusing on structured, goal-oriented support. Coaches help identify objectives, analyse strengths and weaknesses, and provide measurable strategies for progress. Unlike mentoring, coaching is short- to medium-term, goal-focused, and outcome-driven.

I recall working with a coach to improve my public speaking. I was terrified of standing in front of large audiences. My coach guided me through structured exercises, provided feedback, and encouraged small, consistent actions. Gradually, my fear diminished, my confidence grew, and I began delivering presentations with poise. Coaching empowers individuals to take control of their growth, build self-belief, and achieve measurable progress.

The COACH Framework provides clarity for coaching:

- C – Confidence:** Build self-belief.
- O – Objective:** Set clear, actionable goals.
- A – Authenticity:** Encourage self-awareness and authenticity.
- C – Compassion:** Provide empathy and support.
- H – Heights:** Help the individual reach their full potential.

MENTOR	COACH
M – Meet: Establish a connection and rapport with the mentee.	C – Confidence Build confidence and self-belief.
E – Engage: Encourage active participation and engagement.	O – Objective: Set clear objectives and goals.
N – Negotiate: Collaborate on goals and expectations.	A – Authenticity: Foster authenticity and self-awareness.
T – Trust: Build trust and credibility.	C – Compassion: Provide empathy and support.
O – Objective: Set clear objectives and goals.	H – Heights: Help individuals reach new heights and achieve their potential.
R – Reflect: Reflect on progress and provide feedback.	

OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL ROLES

Understanding additional developmental roles is important:

- **Counselling:** Focuses on emotional support, coping strategies, and mental well-being.
- **Sponsoring:** Advocates for opportunities, promotions, and visibility.
- **Managing:** Provides performance oversight and accountability.

When combined, these roles create a holistic ecosystem that supports growth, development, and resilience.

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

Oprah Winfrey credits Maya Angelou for helping her find her voice and purpose.

Mark Zuckerberg was mentored by Steve Jobs, shaping his early leadership decisions.

Serena Williams' coaches helped her achieve 23 Grand Slam titles.

These examples illustrate that mentorship and coaching, supported by a network of other developmental roles, can be transformative and empowering.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

For many years, I felt a longing—an unfulfilled sense that I needed guidance, wisdom, and someone to help me navigate my ambitions. Early on, I often felt isolated in decision-making. I vividly remember nights spent reflecting on missed opportunities and wondering whether I was capable of achieving my dreams.

At first, I wasn't ready to receive mentoring. I didn't fully understand the difference between mentoring, coaching, counselling, sponsoring, and managing. Once I learned to differentiate these roles,

opportunities for guidance began appearing at the right moments. Mentors emerged who could guide me through challenges, encourage me to take risks, and reflect on my decisions. Coaches helped me define clear goals, build skills, and measure progress.

Over time, I realized that having multiple mentors and coaches across domains is critical. I have life-skill mentors, peer mentors, reverse mentors, and subject matter experts. Each contributed differently: some challenged my assumptions, others provided reassurance, and a few offered a fresh perspective that fundamentally changed my approach.

One of the most emotional moments for me was working with a reverse mentor—a young professional with immense technical expertise—who challenged me to adopt new ways of thinking about leadership and innovation. Initially, I hesitated to take advice from someone younger, but over time, I realized that insight and wisdom are not confined to age or experience. That experience taught me humility, openness, and the importance of learning from everyone around you.

Becoming a certified coach and mentor allowed me to pay it forward. Guiding hundreds of individuals in personal growth, leadership, relationships, STEM fields, and professional development has been profoundly fulfilling. Seeing people achieve their goals, overcome obstacles, and grow into their potential reminds me why mentorship and coaching are so powerful—not just for skill-building, but for personal transformation.

“A great mentor doesn’t change your path—they help you see the path within you.” — CPP

WHAT I LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND ME

- **Be ready for guidance:** Mentors and coaches appear when you are mentally and emotionally prepared.

- **Diversity matters:** Mentors and coaches from different backgrounds and generations enrich perspective.
- **Reciprocity enhances impact:** Mentoring benefits both mentor and mentee; coaching strengthens both parties.
- **Structure accelerates growth:** Clear objectives, timelines, and accountability yield measurable results.
- **Pay it forward:** Guiding others strengthens your own skills and amplifies positive impact.
- **Observe and emulate:** Learning from leaders, peers, and mentors inspires actionable growth.

The mentors and coaches who guide us often become part of our broader NBV ecosystem—the dependable, available, simple, and human people we surround ourselves with. Mentorship, in that sense, is not separate from our relationships; it is their highest expression.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Mentors and coaches are crucial in achieving your NBV.
2. Mentoring is relationship-driven, broad, and mutually beneficial.
3. Coaching is structured, goal-focused, and results-oriented.
4. Counseling, sponsoring, and managing provide complementary support.
5. A diverse ecosystem of mentors, coaches, and supporters enhances growth, perspective, and impact.
6. Frameworks like MENTOR and COACH offer structured approaches to maximize guidance effectiveness.

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CHAPTER 14:

BUILDING A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." – Helen Keller

Creating a supportive community is one of the most transformative elements in personal and professional growth. A community is not just a collection of individuals—it's a network of people who nurture, inspire, and hold each other accountable. Communities provide a safe space where individuals can share ideas, explore opportunities, learn from failures, celebrate successes, and grow together. Importantly, they foster a deep sense of belongingness, making each member feel seen, valued, and part of something larger than themselves.

Communities can take many forms: online forums, professional networks, social organizations, or even informal gatherings of like-minded individuals. The common thread is that they provide connection, purpose, identity, and growth.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY AND BELONGINGNESS

Communities have the power to fundamentally change the way we live, work, and perceive ourselves. A supportive community provides:

- **Emotional security:** A place to share challenges and setbacks without fear of judgment.
- **Identity reinforcement:** Being part of a group with shared values and goals strengthens self-esteem and purpose.
- **Collective learning:** Members gain insights from diverse experiences and perspectives.

- **Motivation and accountability:** Being part of a network encourages consistent progress toward personal and collective goals.

I remember joining a small group of individuals passionate about personal development. We met once a week, sharing our experiences, challenges, and wins. Being part of that community gave me a sense of belonging—I felt understood and supported. That belongingness provided courage to take risks, experiment with new ideas, and be vulnerable in sharing failures.

Seth Godin in *Tribes* emphasizes this beautifully:

"Tribes make our lives better. And leading a tribe is the best life of all."

A community that fosters belongingness can help members navigate life's challenges, celebrate achievements, and maintain a sense of purpose and identity essential for long-term growth.

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Creating a thriving, inclusive, and belonging-oriented community requires deliberate effort:

- **Foster a culture of inclusion and empathy:** Ensure that every individual feels welcomed and valued. Celebrate diversity of thought, experience, and background. Open communication and active listening are essential.
- **Provide resources, mentorship, and support:** Enable members to access guidance, knowledge, and tools. Mentorship helps in creating a sense of belonging, as members feel seen and supported by more experienced peers.
- **Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing:** Promote environments where members share ideas, provide feedback, and

collaborate on projects. This engagement reinforces the feeling of being part of something larger.

- **Celebrate achievements and progress:** Recognize milestones, accomplishments, and personal growth motivates members and strengthens community bonds.
- **Maintain regular communication:** Regular check-ins, newsletters, and forums help members stay connected and engaged.



THE CONTEXT OF BELONGINGNESS

Belongingness is one of the deepest human needs. It gives us connection, acceptance, identity, and emotional safety. When we feel we belong, we grow with confidence, clarity, and courage. Without belonging, we shrink, doubt ourselves, and disconnect from our potential. Belongingness shapes our mindset and influences our journey toward our *Next Best Version* (NBV).

BELONGINGNESS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Society: Offers the first sense of shared culture, values, traditions, and collective pride. These roots create stability and strength. A supportive community helps rebuild societal belonging by creating safe, inclusive spaces where people feel accepted and uplifted.

Family: Gives us our first experience of love, trust, and emotional safety. Even when family bonds are imperfect or fragile, belongingness can be rebuilt through empathy, chosen relationships, and intentional connection.

Workplace: Enhances engagement, creativity, confidence, and performance. Workplaces become thriving environments when individuals feel valued, included, and respected for who they are—not just for the roles they fulfill.

THE FOUNDATION: SELF-BELONGING

Before belongingness with others, we must first belong to ourselves.

Self-belonging means feeling proud of who you are, connected to your roots, secure in your values, and aligned to your NBV journey.

It is built through:

- Know Yourself
- Accept Yourself
- Respect Yourself
- Value Yourself
- Belong to Yourself

When self-belonging is strong, external belonging becomes natural and effortless.

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- **KNOW YOURSELF**
- **ACCEPT YOURSELF**
- **RESPECT YOURSELF**
- **VALUE YOURSELF**
- **BELONG TO YOURSELF**

LINKING SELF-BELONGING TO SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

A supportive community is the external extension of internal belonging.

When you belong to yourself, you attract people who match your values, energy, and aspirations.

And when you find a positive, supportive community, your sense of belonging expands beyond the self — you experience:

- Shared identity
- Shared encouragement
- Shared resilience
- Shared learning
- Shared growth

This alignment strengthens your confidence, deepens emotional safety, and accelerates your journey toward your *Next Best Version*.

HOW SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES IMPROVE BELONGINGNESS

Supportive communities help you:

- Feel seen and valued
- Build resilience through connection
- Gain encouragement during setbacks
- Share ideas without fear
- Celebrate wins together
- Develop purpose and meaning
- Expand your sense of identity
- Amplify your NBV journey

Self-belonging → Community belonging → Stronger NBV path



Self-belonging leads to community belonging,
and community belonging accelerates your
NBV journey.

Self-belonging leads to community belonging, and community belonging accelerates your NBV journey.

When both align, a person experiences groundedness, confidence, and renewed strength to grow, evolve, and become their *Next Best Version*.

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

A structured return-to-work initiative in the life-sciences sector supports individuals returning to work after a career break. By providing mentorship and networking, it fosters inclusion and a sense of belonging, enabling confidence and reintegration.

Online communities (Discourse, Feverbee): Demonstrate that even virtual communities can create strong connections, shared purpose, and learning opportunities across geographies.

Local social or professional clubs: Organizations like Rotary International provide structured ways to build trust, collaborate on projects, and create lasting relationships.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

Being part of communities has been central to my journey toward becoming my *Next Best Version* (NBV). From online forums to in-person meetups, each community taught me something different.

I recall joining a personal development community in my early career. Meetings were informal but deeply engaging. I felt seen, understood, and included, which motivated me to share openly, take risks, and experiment with new ideas. Later, professional communities offered mentorship and networking, providing resources and connections that strengthened my sense of belonging in my career ecosystem.

As I progressed, I began building communities myself through LinkedIn groups, WhatsApp groups, and professional networks. Creating spaces where others felt supported, valued, and part of a collective journey reinforced my understanding of belonging. The most impactful experience was being part of Rotary International, where shared vision, collaboration, and a sense of family enabled meaningful personal and professional growth. I joined Rotary International 25 years ago, where I met like-minded individuals and worked together for common social causes. This experience gave me

a profound sense of purpose and belonging, showing me how collective effort magnifies impact.

Over the years, I have also joined multiple professional and social networks:

- **Women Network Forum in Malaysia** – connecting with women leaders, sharing experiences, and mentoring each other.
- **HR Forums** – participating in discussions on workforce strategy, leadership, and employee engagement.
- **Innovation Forums** – collaborating with professionals to explore creative solutions and share best practices.
- **Employee Volunteering Forums** – driving initiatives to give back to the community while fostering collaboration and purpose.

These experiences reinforced the importance of nurturing relationships, giving first, and creating spaces where individuals feel valued.

I also recall joining a personal development community in my early career. Meetings were informal but deeply engaging. I felt seen, understood, and included, which motivated me to share openly, take risks, and experiment with new ideas. Professional communities offered mentorship and networking, providing resources and connections that strengthened my sense of belonging in my career ecosystem.

LESSONS FROM OBSERVING LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND ME

Observing leaders and peers has reinforced that thriving communities are intentional, empathetic, and values-driven. Leaders who foster belonging:

- Invest in relationships, actively listen, and create trust.
- Encourage collaboration, inclusivity, and recognition.

- Prioritize giving and supporting others before expecting reciprocity.
- Recognize that belonging is emotional as much as structural: people contribute more when they feel valued and included.

LINKING COMMUNITY BUILDING AND BELONGING TO NBV

Communities accelerate personal growth and NBV by offering:

- **Knowledge and insight:** Exposure to diverse experiences strengthens learning.
- **Skills development:** Shared projects and mentorship enhance capabilities.
- **Emotional support and accountability:** Belonging provides safety to take risks and pursue goals.
- **Holistic growth:** Feeling connected, supported, and valued fuels confidence and resilience.

FRAMEWORK: COMMUNITY-BELONG

To guide community-building with belongingness, I developed the COMMUNITY-BELONG Framework:

COMMUNITY

Framework

C - Connect: Build genuine relationships.

O - Open Communication: Encourage transparency and active listening.

M - Mentor & Support: Offer guidance and resources.

M - Motivate: Celebrate achievements and inspire participation.

U - Understand: Recognize individual needs and contributions

N - Nurture: Foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment

I - Inspire: Lead by example, encouraging authenticity

T - Thrive: Foster collective growth and collaboration

Y - Yield Impact: Generate meaningful value for members

BELONG Framework

B

Belong: Ensure each member feels included, valued, and connected.

E

Engage: Actively involve members in meaningful activities.

L

Listen: Prioritize empathy and attention.

O

Opportunity: Provide chances for growth and learning.

N

Network: Facilitate connections inside and outside the community.

G

Grow Together: Ensure collective development alongside individual progress.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Building a supportive community requires intentionality, empathy, and consistent engagement.
2. Fostering inclusion, trust, and recognition creates a strong sense of belonging.
3. Providing mentorship, sharing knowledge, and celebrating achievements strengthens community ties.
4. Communities accelerate personal and professional growth while enabling members to feel connected and valued.

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CHAPTER 15: THE POWER OF GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more." – Melody Beattie

There are moments in life when the simplest practices create the most profound shifts. Gratitude and appreciation are two such practices. They appear gentle, almost understated, yet their impact on our emotional landscape, relationships, and mindset is extraordinary. As I reflect on pivotal phases of my own growth, I realise that whenever I made a leap forward toward my *Next Best Version* (NBV), these two virtues were silently influencing the way I thought, responded, and connected.

Gratitude is often described as a feeling—a warm recognition of the good we have, the blessings we receive, and the lessons life offers us. Yet gratitude is far more than an emotion; it is a perspective. It is a conscious choice to notice abundance instead of lack, progress instead of perfection, and meaning even in discomfort. Gratitude grounds us. It strengthens humility, deepens awareness, and stabilises our inner world—all essential components for personal transformation and the NBV journey.

Appreciation, on the other hand, plays a different but complementary role. While gratitude is inward, appreciation is outward. It is the intentional expression of recognition acknowledging the effort, value, or presence of another person, or even celebrating the effort you invest in yourself. Appreciation requires courage, presence, and genuine attention. When expressed authentically, it becomes a bridge of connection. If gratitude opens the heart, appreciation opens the space between hearts.

Together, these two virtues create a virtuous cycle of upliftment. Gratitude nurtures emotional balance, resilience, and presence. Appreciation fosters collaboration, compassion, and trust. One elevates your inner world; the other elevates your outer world. And both are indispensable on the path to becoming your *Next Best Version*.

Scientific research continues to reinforce what ancient wisdom long understood. Individuals who practice gratitude consistently experience reduced stress and anxiety, stronger emotional regulation, and improved mental well-being. When appreciation is added, relationships flourish, teams grow stronger, and emotional safety increases. Acknowledgment is one of the deepest human needs—appreciation fulfills it with dignity, kindness, and intention.

In this chapter, we will explore gratitude and appreciation not merely as positive habits but as transformative forces that shape how we think, feel, lead, and evolve. We will look at practical ways to integrate them into daily life through rituals, reflection exercises, conversations, workplace culture, and personal leadership. I will also share personal experiences and lessons from people who demonstrated the quiet power of these virtues through their actions. Their influence helped me understand that gratitude and appreciation are not personality traits; they are practices—choices we make every single day.

Most importantly, we will connect these virtues to your NBV journey and build a structured model that shows how gratitude strengthens your foundation while appreciation amplifies your influence. Together, they form a powerful pathway to growth, fulfilment, and meaningful connection.

Gratitude and appreciation are not just emotions; they are tools of transformation. When consistently practiced, they shape our mindset, deepen our relationships, strengthen resilience, and illuminate the stepping stones toward our *Next Best Version*.

THE BENEFITS OF GRATITUDE AND ITS LINK TO NBV

Gratitude shifts the inner narrative that shapes how we perceive life. Its benefits reach deep into our emotional and psychological patterns:

1. Emotional Clarity & Balance

Gratitude reduces emotional noise. It helps us recognise what is working, even when circumstances are challenging, enabling clarity rather than chaos.

NBV Link: Emotional clarity accelerates self-awareness, a core NBV pillar.

2. Reduced Stress & Anxiety

Research shows gratitude activates neural pathways associated with calmness and emotional regulation.

NBV Link: A regulated emotional state enables better decision-making on the NBV journey.

3. Perspective & Meaning

Gratitude reframes setbacks as lessons, deepening maturity and perspective.

NBV Link: Seeing life through a lens of learning fuels continuous growth.

4. Inner Resilience

When you recognise what you have, you expand your ability to cope with what you don't.

NBV Link: Resilience is the emotional backbone of evolving into the *Next Best Version*.

“Gratitude turns moments into lessons and lessons into wisdom—and wisdom is the fuel for your Next Best Version.” — CPP

THE BENEFITS OF APPRECIATION AND ITS CONNECTION TO NBV

Appreciation expands what gratitude begins. It strengthens your external world—your relationships, influence, and leadership presence.

1. Stronger Relationships & Trust

Appreciation validates effort, encourages contribution, and nurtures belonging.

NBV Link: NBV growth is impossible without healthy connections and supportive relationships.

2. Increased Motivation & Engagement

Whether in teams or personal relationships, people lean in when they feel seen.

NBV Link: Appreciation fuels positive cycles of behaviour that accelerate growth.

3. Enhanced Confidence & Self-Value

Appreciating your own progress strengthens self-belief.

NBV Link: Confidence is a catalyst for taking risks, embracing discomfort, and expanding horizons.

4. A Culture of Positivity & Collaboration

Appreciation creates an environment where people uplift each other rather than compete.

NBV Link: NBV requires ecosystems that support—not suffocate—growth.

“Appreciation is the mirror that reflects the best in others and reminds you of the best within yourself.” — CPP

HOW GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION CONNECT—THE NBV SYNERGY

Gratitude and appreciation are distinct but inseparable. Their power is amplified when they are practiced together:

- Gratitude is awareness: It helps you notice the good.
- Appreciation is expression: It helps you reinforce the good.

Gratitude strengthens your inner world—mindset, emotions, and resilience.

Appreciation strengthens your outer world—relationships, collaboration, and influence.

Together they create a holistic support system for becoming your *Next Best Version*:

Gratitude → Appreciation → Connection → Resilience → Growth
→ NBV

This cycle reinforces a life of meaning, connection, and continuous evolution.

As Melody Beattie, author of *The Language of Letting Go*, says, "*Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more.*"

STRATEGIES FOR CULTIVATING APPRECIATION

Practical steps help embed gratitude into daily life:

"Dude, Gratitude is an attitude" — CPP

Gratitude journaling: Write down three to five things you are grateful for each day. Over time, this habit shifts focus from scarcity to abundance and enhances mindfulness.

Express appreciation actively: Thank colleagues, friends, or family sincerely. Notes, verbal acknowledgments, or small gestures create ripple effects, boosting motivation and engagement.

Mindfulness and presence: Pause to notice small, often overlooked moments—nature, kind gestures, or moments of insight. Awareness strengthens emotional regulation and nurtures joy.

Reframe challenges as opportunities: View obstacles as learning opportunities. This mental shift allows gratitude to coexist with adversity, promoting resilience.

Give back: Transform gratitude into action—volunteer, mentor, or contribute to causes. Giving reinforces purpose, strengthens social bonds, and amplifies the sense of fulfilment.

Strategies for Cultivating Appreciation

“Dude, gratitude is an attitude.” – CPP



Gratitude Journaling

Write down three to five things you are grateful for each day.



Express Appreciation Actively

Thank colleagues, friends, or family sincerely.



Mindfulness and Presence

Pause to notice small, often overlooked moments



Reframe Challenges as Opportunities

View obstacles as learning opportunities



Give Back

Volunteer, mentor, or contribute to causes

STRATEGIES FOR CULTIVATING GRATITUDE

Practical strategies make gratitude a lived experience rather than a fleeting feeling. When practiced consistently, they reshape mindset, deepen awareness, and anchor you to your NBV journey.

“Gratitude turns ordinary days into extraordinary reminders of how far you’ve come.” — CPP

1. Daily Gratitude Reflections

Dedicate a few minutes each day to reflect on what you are thankful for moments, people, lessons, or experiences. This intentional practice shifts attention away from what is lacking and redirects your mind toward abundance, clarity, and growth. Over time, it creates a more grounded emotional foundation.

2. Notice the Good in Real Time

Instead of waiting for the day to end, pause throughout the day to acknowledge small victories, acts of kindness, or moments of peace. Real-time gratitude strengthens mindfulness, reduces emotional reactivity, and helps you stay connected to the present moment.

3. Gratitude Mapping

Create a simple visual map of the people, experiences, skills, and opportunities that shape your life. Seeing them laid out helps reinforce perspective and deepen appreciation for the support systems that enable your NBV journey.

4. Celebrate Micro-Lessons

Every setback carries a lesson. Practicing gratitude during challenging times enables you to extract meaning from discomfort. This habit strengthens resilience and supports continuous learning, which are essential traits of the *Next Best Version* of yourself.

5. Share Your Gratitude with Others

Saying “*I’m grateful for you*” or acknowledging how someone’s presence made a difference amplifies the emotional impact of gratitude. Expressed gratitude encourages positive energy, strengthens relationships, and fosters environments where growth and authenticity thrive.

6. Anchor Gratitude to Routines

Attach gratitude moments to existing habits: morning coffee, daily commute, post-meal reflection, or journaling time. When gratitude

becomes part of your natural rhythm, it grows into an unconscious mindset rather than an occasional practice.

7. Practice Gratitude for the Self

Recognize and honor your own efforts—discipline, courage, patience, or progress. Self-gratitude builds internal confidence, reduces self-criticism, and strengthens your ability to appreciate others genuinely.

8. Transform Gratitude into Action

Let gratitude guide your behavior. Offer help, mentor someone, uplift a colleague, or return generosity to your community. When gratitude flows into action, it becomes a force that expands purpose, fulfilment, and personal evolution.

Strategies for Cultivating Gratitude

“Gratitude turns ordinary days into extraordinary reminders of how far you’ve come.” — CPP



Daily Gratitude Reflections

Set aside a few minutes daily to reflect on things you are thankful for.



Notice the Good in Real Time

Pause throughout the day to acknowledge small acts of kindness or moments of peace.



Gratitude Mapping

Create a visual map of the people and things that positively impact your life.



Celebrate Micro-Lessons

Find lessons in even the smallest challenges and setbacks.



Share Your Gratitude with Others

Express thanks and appreciation sincerely and often.



Anchor Gratitude to Routines

Link gratitude to daily habits, like your morning coffee.



Transform Gratitude into Action

Help others, mentor someone, or give back to your community.

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

Gratitude rituals: Many cultures celebrate gratitude through daily practices, communal ceremonies, or sharing reflections during meals.

Appreciation in the workplace: Organizations like Google and Zappos integrate recognition into their culture, leading to improved productivity, morale, and employee engagement.

Community initiatives: Programs like Back2Work or 2nd Innings support individuals returning to the workforce, showing that recognition and inclusion strengthen belonging and confidence.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

Reflecting on my journey, I realize that practicing gratitude and appreciation has been one of the most transformative experiences of my life. It started in small, subtle ways: noticing the kindness of a stranger, the support of a colleague, or the love of family and friends. Over time, I recognized that these small moments of gratitude were the building blocks of resilience, perspective, and emotional well-being.

When I began my professional career, I was caught up in targets, deadlines, and the constant hustle. Amid the chaos, I often overlooked the importance of recognizing the contributions of others and expressing genuine appreciation. One turning point came during a challenging project where my team went above and beyond. I realized that acknowledging their effort and expressing heartfelt gratitude not only lifted their spirits but also strengthened our bond and teamwork. That was my first tangible lesson in the power of appreciation.

Over the years, I also discovered the joy of giving back. I started making gratitude a habit by journaling three things each day I was thankful for. It helped me focus on what truly mattered and shifted my perspective from scarcity to abundance. This practice extended into professional spaces, where I began appreciating not just

successes but also the effort, perseverance, and small wins along the way.

Communities played a pivotal role in this journey. I joined Rotary International 25 years ago, where I met like-minded people and worked together for common social causes. Being part of this community taught me the value of collaboration, empathy, and shared purpose. It was a space where giving first became natural, and in return, I received learning, growth, and a sense of belonging. I also became part of several forums—the Women’s Network Forum in Malaysia, HR forums, Innovation forums, and Employee Volunteering forums. Each community contributed unique insights, mentorship opportunities, and inspiration that shaped my personal and professional development.

Practicing gratitude also became a spiritual and reflective exercise for me. I noticed that pausing to appreciate even the smallest moments—like a conversation with a colleague, a productive brainstorming session, or simply the beauty of a sunrise—helped me cultivate mindfulness and presence. These moments of recognition allowed me to approach challenges with calmness and optimism, turning potential stress into motivation and clarity.

“Gratitude turns ordinary days into extraordinary lessons.” — CPP

LESSONS FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Observing leaders and remarkable individuals has been an integral part of my growth journey. Each interaction offered insights that no book or course could teach. From them, I learned that gratitude and appreciation are not merely polite gestures but powerful tools for leadership, team building, and personal growth.

Consistency is key: I observed leaders who consistently acknowledged efforts, both big and small. Whether it was a major project milestone or an everyday contribution, they made it a point to express gratitude. I realized that consistent recognition reinforces positive behaviors and motivates continuous effort.

Authenticity matters: Leaders who inspired me practiced authentic appreciation. They didn't just offer generic "thank you" but expressed genuine acknowledgment that reflected an understanding of individual contributions. This taught me that appreciation must be heartfelt to be impactful.

Gratitude fosters trust: I noticed that teams led by appreciative leaders were more cohesive, collaborative, and resilient. Gratitude builds trust and deepens relationships because people feel seen, valued, and respected.

Appreciation fuels growth: Leaders I admired often highlighted efforts and progress rather than just outcomes. This reinforced the mindset that learning and improvement are as valuable as success, encouraging experimentation and innovation without fear of failure.

Giving first: Across communities and organizations, I observed the profound impact of leaders who gave recognition, guidance, and support without expecting immediate returns. This principle of giving first—whether through mentoring, coaching, or expressing gratitude—created a ripple effect that elevated entire teams and networks.

Through these observations, I began to understand that gratitude and appreciation are not isolated acts—they are integral to creating environments that nurture trust, engagement, and growth. They shape culture, influence behaviour, and strengthen the bonds that allow individuals and communities to thrive.

LINKING GRATITUDE & APPRECIATION TO NBV

Gratitude and appreciation are integral to achieving the *Next Best Version* (NBV) of oneself:

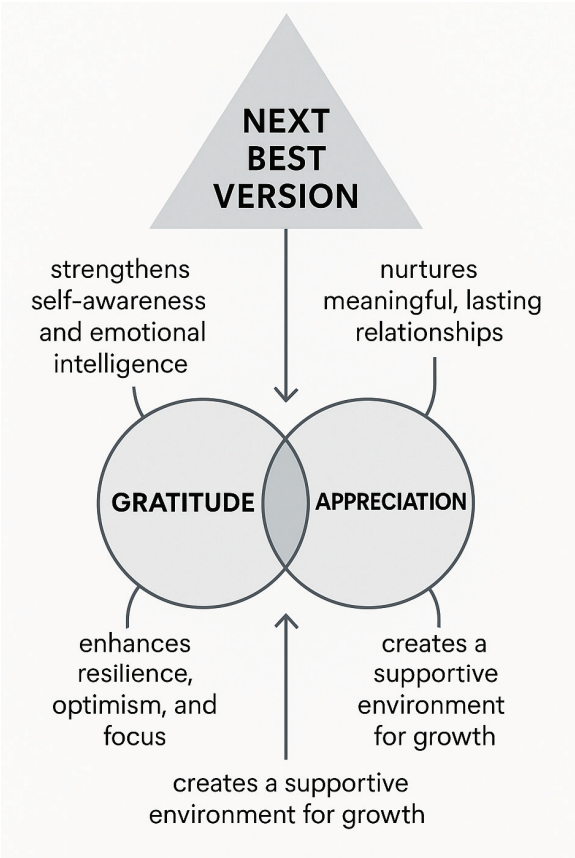
They strengthen self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

They nurture meaningful, lasting relationships.

They create a supportive environment conducive to growth and collaboration.

They enhance resilience, optimism, and focus in the face of challenges.

Practicing gratitude and appreciation consistently transforms mindset, behaviour, and culture, enabling individuals to thrive personally and professionally.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1. Gratitude transforms mindset, relationships, and resilience.
 - Simple practices cultivate appreciation
 - Journaling
 - Expressing thanks
 - Mindfulness

2. Reframing challenges strengthens growth.
3. Appreciation fosters meaningful connections and a positive environment.

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SECTION 4:
SUSTAINING AND GROWING YOUR
NBV

CHAPTER 16:

SELF-COACHING AND SELF-RESILIENCE

FOR NBV

"Resilience is not about avoiding challenges, but about coaching yourself through them and rising stronger each time." — CPP

THE JOURNEY OF SELF-COACHING AND SELF-RESILIENCE

Finding your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not just about external achievements—it is about inner mastery, self-awareness, and the ability to navigate challenges with purpose and clarity. Two critical skills in this journey are self-coaching and self-resilience.

Self-coaching is the deliberate practice of reflecting, questioning, and guiding yourself toward growth. It allows you to examine your thoughts, behaviors, and habits with curiosity, openness, and accountability. Self-resilience, on the other hand, is your inner strength to recover from setbacks, adapt to challenges, and remain committed to your goals.

Together, these skills create a powerful feedback loop: self-coaching helps you identify opportunities for growth, while resilience ensures you persist despite obstacles. They are not innate traits but learned habits, developed over time through reflection, practice, and conscious effort.

THE POWER OF COACHING IN SELF-GROWTH

Coaching is often seen as a tool for correcting weaknesses, but in reality, it is a catalyst for excellence and self-discovery. While external coaches and mentors are invaluable, the ability to coach oneself is equally transformative.

In organizations, coaching fosters a culture of learning, growth, and collaboration. Leaders who adopt coaching practices inspire curiosity, accountability, and courage in their teams. Similarly, in personal development, self-coaching empowers you to take charge of your growth, rather than waiting for guidance from others.

Coaching is also a tool for leveraging strengths. Just as sports coaches help elite athletes reach new heights, self-coaching enables you to build upon your abilities, refine skills, and explore untapped potential. Studies show that employees who receive regular coaching are more likely to perform at higher levels, feel engaged, and take ownership of their growth, demonstrating that coaching is both an art and a science.

THE COACH MODEL FOR SELF-COACHING AND SELF-RESILIENCE

To systematically develop self-coaching and resilience, I recommend the COACH model:

C – Curious: Approach every challenge with curiosity and eagerness to learn.

O – Open-minded: Embrace diverse perspectives, feedback, and alternative approaches.

A – Accountable: Take ownership of your actions, decisions, and growth.

C – Courageous: Confront fears, setbacks, and challenges bravely.

H – Humble: Recognize that you do not have all the answers and remain open to learning.

MODEL FOR SELF-COACHING AND SELF-RESILIENCE

C	Approach challenges with curiosity and eagerness to learn.
O	Embrace diverse perspectives, feedback, and alternative approaches.
A	Take ownership of your actions, decisions, and growth.
C	Confront fears, setbacks, and challenges bravely.
H	Recognize that you do not have all the answers and remain open to learning.

USING THE COACH MODEL FOR SELF-COACHING AND SELF-RESILIENCE

The COACH model provides a structured approach to guide your self-coaching journey while simultaneously building resilience. Each step encourages reflection, accountability, and action, helping you navigate challenges and achieve your *Next Best Version* (NBV).

C – Curious: Identify an area for improvement or growth

The first step in self-coaching is curiosity. Start by identifying a skill, behaviour, or area of your life where you want to grow. Be honest with yourself about gaps or challenges without judgment. Ask yourself questions such as:

“What is one area I want to improve in my personal or professional life?”

“Where do I feel stuck, and what patterns might be holding me back?”

Curiosity allows you to approach self-improvement with an open mind rather than defensiveness, turning challenges into opportunities for growth.

O – Open-minded: Reflect with curiosity and consider multiple perspectives

Once you’ve identified an area for growth, reflect deeply. Use curiosity to explore your experiences: *“What can I learn from this situation?”* and *“How might others perceive this?”*

Seek multiple perspectives by asking for feedback from trusted colleagues, mentors, or peers. Embrace new ideas, even if they challenge your current beliefs. Being open-minded increases adaptability—a key component of resilience—and helps you uncover creative solutions.

A – Accountable: Take ownership of your actions and changes

Self-coaching requires personal accountability. Once you understand your area of growth and receive feedback, commit to actionable steps. Ask yourself:

“What specific actions will I take to improve?”

“How will I measure progress and success?”

Being accountable strengthens self-discipline, ensures consistent practice, and reinforces your commitment to achieving your NBV. Accountability also helps you rebound from setbacks, as you recognize responsibility without self-blame.

C – Courageous: Act despite fear and uncertainty

Growth often requires stepping out of your comfort zone. Courage in self-coaching means taking bold steps toward improvement, even when outcomes are uncertain or failure seems possible. For example:

Initiate a difficult conversation with a colleague.

Try a new approach in your work that challenges existing habits.

Courage fosters resilience because it teaches you to face adversity with determination. Each time you act courageously, you strengthen your ability to recover from setbacks and embrace challenges as opportunities.

H – Humble: Stay teachable and learn continuously from experiences and others

Humility completes the COACH model. Recognize that self-coaching is a journey, and you will not have all the answers immediately. Stay open to learning from mistakes, feedback, and the experiences of others. Ask yourself:

“What did I learn from this situation?”

“How can I apply these lessons to improve further?”

Humility ensures that your self-coaching and resilience practices remain dynamic and evolving. It allows you to integrate continuous learning, adapt to new challenges, and maintain perspective during both successes and failures.

This structured approach not only develops self-coaching skills but also enhances resilience, empowering you to bounce back from challenges, maintain focus, and achieve your *Next Best Version* (NBV).

“The most powerful coach you’ll ever meet is the voice you learn to guide within.” — CPP

SELF-RESILIENCE - CULTIVATING INNER STRENGTH WITH THE PCVC METHOD

Self-resilience is the ability to rise from within—not because life becomes easier, but because you become clearer, stronger, and more anchored in who you are becoming. While external support systems matter, the deepest resilience is built internally, through purpose, clarity, and emotional grounding.

To make the practice simple and actionable, here is the PCVC Framework—a four-step method to build self-resilience from the inside out. These four steps help you find your inner anchor, especially during uncertainty, pressure, or emotional turbulence, thereby helping you find your NBV!

THE PCVC METHOD

P — Purpose: Know Why You Must Rise

Every resilient person has a strong ‘why’—a reason big enough to overcome fear, resistance, and self-doubt.

Purpose is not always dramatic. Sometimes it is a quiet clarity:

“I want to grow.”

“I want to honour my potential.”

“I want to become my Next Best Version.”

Purpose becomes your inner compass when life becomes chaotic.

Ask yourself:

- *“Why does this matter to me?”*
- *“What version of me will this struggle help me become?”*

Purpose gives meaning to the challenge and transforms obstacles into stepping stones.

C — Connect: Build an Emotional Link to Your Purpose

Purpose becomes powerful only when you emotionally connect to it.

Connection is the bridge between knowing and caring, between intention and energy.

You connect to your purpose by:

- Seeing how it aligns with your NBV journey
- Understanding the value it brings to your life

- Feeling the emotional pull behind your goal
- Recognizing what is at stake if you don't change

When you feel your purpose, resilience awakens.

You are no longer pushing yourself—you are being pulled forward by meaning.

V — Visualise: See the Path and the Person You Will Become

Visualization is not fantasy; it is mental programming.

When you visualise:

- The journey
- The struggle
- The growth
- The future version of yourself
- The life your NBV will unlock

... your mind begins to believe it is possible.

Visualisation builds resilience by reducing fear of the unknown.

It helps you “rehearse” your success mentally so your actions can follow with confidence.

Ask yourself:

- *“Who am I becoming through this challenge?”*
- *“How will my life change when I reach this version of myself?”*

The clearer the visual, the deeper the drive.

C — Commit: Decide That You Will Reach It — No Matter What

Commitment is the backbone of self-resilience.

Commitment means:

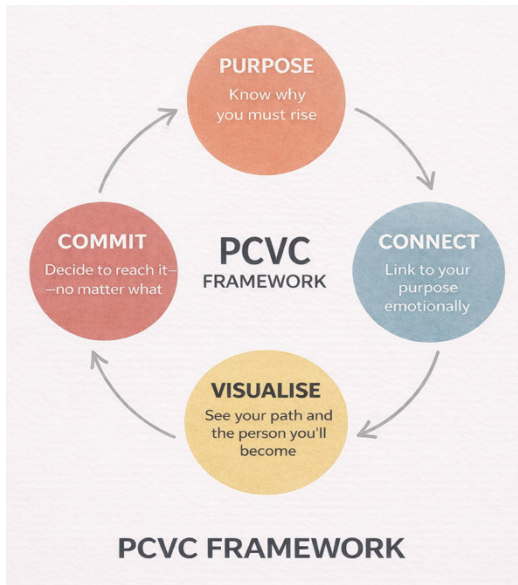
- Showing up even when you don't feel like it
- Staying the course when distractions tempt you
- Holding your standards even when others lower theirs
- Being loyal to your future self

Commitment is a promise—not to the world, but to yourself.

When Purpose, Connection, and Visualization come together, commitment becomes natural.

You don't force it—you embody it.

Commitment is where resilience becomes identity.



THE POWER OF PCVC

When life becomes heavy, complex, or uncertain, PCVC brings you back to your center:

- Purpose grounds you.
- Connection fuels you.

- Visualization guides you.
- Commitment strengthens you.

Together, they form a simple but profound self-coaching loop that keeps you aligned with your NBV, especially when circumstances try to pull you away.

Self-resilience is not about being unbreakable.

It is about knowing how to rebuild yourself—again and again—with deeper wisdom and stronger purpose.

“Resilience strengthens your steps. Purpose lights your path. Commitment ensures you keep walking.” — CPP

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I reflect on my life, I realize that self-coaching and self-resilience have been the anchors that have guided me through turbulent waters. These skills have allowed me to navigate uncertainty, face setbacks with courage, and steadily move toward my *Next Best Version* (NBV). There were moments when I felt utterly lost, overwhelmed by self-doubt, and unsure whether I could continue.

I remember the profound disappointment when I didn’t get into my preferred college course. The sense of failure weighed heavily on me, and for a while, I felt my dreams slipping away. Yet, even in that moment of despair, I sensed a spark—a whisper that said, *“This is not the end; it’s a beginning. What can you learn from this?”* That curiosity to reflect, to coach myself, became the first step in building resilience.

Growing up in a family with limited financial resources added another layer of challenge. My parents did their best, but there were times when we simply could not afford opportunities that others took for granted. I remember watching my friends leave on trips or participate in activities I couldn’t join. The feeling of exclusion was painful, but it became a lesson in resourcefulness and gratitude. I learned that even when circumstances are beyond your control, you

can choose your response. Those small moments of practicing patience, humility, and creative problem-solving were my first real lessons in self-coaching.

As I entered the professional world, challenges grew more complex. There were projects that failed, opportunities that slipped away, and moments when I questioned my own abilities. I recall vividly the first time I was passed over for a promotion I had worked tirelessly for. I remember sitting alone, staring at the ceiling, feeling defeated. But I refused to let failure define me. Instead, I turned inward, journaling my thoughts, meditating, and honestly reflecting on my strengths and weaknesses. I began to identify actionable strategies for growth. Slowly, I learned to celebrate small wins, acknowledge progress, and approach challenges with clarity rather than despair.

Over time, I discovered the transformative power of resilience. Life tested me in ways I could never have imagined. I lost a business and a significant amount of money—a moment that felt like hitting rock bottom. I could have given up, but instead, I turned to self-coaching. I asked myself: *“What can I learn from this? How can I emerge stronger and wiser?”* Step by step, I rebuilt my confidence, recalibrated my strategies, and moved forward with determination. I realized that setbacks are not failures—they are lessons disguised as challenges.

Self-coaching also helped me to develop a growth mindset. I learned to focus on solutions rather than problems, to view mistakes as learning opportunities, and to embrace accountability for my actions. I learned to be courageous in the face of fear, humble in the face of feedback, and patient with myself during times of struggle. Resilience enabled me to recover from adversity, adapt to new circumstances, and maintain focus on my goals.

Some of the most powerful lessons came from observing others. I remember a colleague telling me once, *“You always find a way forward, even when there seems to be none.”* It struck me that self-coaching and resilience are not only about overcoming personal

challenges—they are about modelling courage, confidence, and persistence for others as well.

Even high-pressure situations, like leading critical projects or navigating major organizational change, became opportunities to apply self-coaching and resilience. By using the COACH model—approaching challenges with curiosity, openness, accountability, courage, and humility—I could face uncertainty with clarity. I learned that challenges are less about the difficulty itself and more about how we choose to respond.

Alongside professional challenges, life presented deeply personal lessons. I have faced moments of doubt, fear, and loneliness, yet each experience became an opportunity to coach myself, reflect, and grow. I learned the importance of self-compassion—the simple yet profound act of being kind to oneself even when things go wrong. I learned that believing in my own potential often required quiet persistence, daily reflection, and a willingness to experiment, fail, and try again.

Through all these experiences, I’ve come to understand that self-coaching and self-resilience are inseparable. Self-coaching provides the reflection, insight, and clarity necessary to identify growth opportunities, while resilience provides the strength to persist, recover, and adapt in the face of setbacks. Together, they have allowed me to navigate life’s complexities, achieve personal and professional growth, and move steadily toward my NBV.

As I look back, I also see the joy in small victories—the first time I overcame a fear, the moment I implemented a lesson learned from failure, or when I helped a colleague or team member find their own strength. These moments reaffirm that self-coaching and resilience are both personal practices and sources of inspiration for others.

Finally, I want to leave you with a message of hope: *“Your Next Best Version is waiting on the other side of curiosity, courage, and self-belief. Every setback is a teacher, every challenge an opportunity,*

and every day a chance to coach yourself toward resilience and growth.”

This journey has taught me that resilience is cultivated, self-belief is nurtured, and self-coaching is the tool that turns obstacles into stepping stones. By embracing these practices, anyone can discover their *Next Best Version*.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND ME

Observing leaders, mentors, and peers has reinforced essential lessons about self-coaching and resilience:

1. **Persistence matters more than perfection:** True growth comes from consistently learning and applying lessons.
2. **Feedback is a gift:** Humble receptiveness to constructive criticism accelerates learning.
3. **Leading by example inspires others:** Demonstrating resilience motivates teams to cultivate their own NBV.
4. **Self-awareness is foundational:** Understanding strengths, weaknesses, and values guides self-coaching and adaptive strategies.
5. **Courage and humility must coexist:** Taking calculated risks while remaining open to learning ensures sustainable growth.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Self-coaching and self-resilience are vital for achieving your Next Best Version.
2. The COACH model provides a structured framework to guide reflection, learning, and action.
3. Effective self-coaching requires curiosity, open-mindedness, accountability, courage, and humility.

4. Combining self-coaching with resilience enables personal growth, confidence, and sustained achievement.

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CHAPTER 17:

EMBRACING LIFELONG LEARNING AND PERSONAL GROWTH

In today's fast-paced, ever-evolving world, the ability to learn continuously and grow personally is more than a competitive advantage—it's essential for thriving in both personal and professional life. Lifelong learning is not just about acquiring knowledge; it is about cultivating curiosity, resilience, adaptability, and a growth mindset.

Embracing lifelong learning allows us to remain relevant, innovative, and fulfilled. It provides the tools to navigate uncertainty, overcome challenges, and achieve our *Next Best Version* (NBV).

THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFELONG LEARNING

By embracing lifelong learning and personal growth, we can cultivate a more adaptable and resilient mindset. As Albert Einstein said, "*Once you stop learning, you start dying.*"

Lifelong learning is no longer optional; it is a critical skill for thriving in an ever-changing world. In today's fast-paced environment, technology, industries, and societal needs evolve rapidly. What was relevant yesterday may be out-dated tomorrow. Those who commit to continuous learning stay adaptable, competitive, and prepared for unexpected challenges.

Learning continuously strengthens both professional capabilities and personal growth. It keeps your mind agile, fuels creativity, and equips you to tackle problems with innovative solutions. Lifelong learning is not just about acquiring knowledge—it's about developing the ability to **learn how to learn**. This meta-skill ensures that you can

quickly adapt to new information, technologies, or circumstances throughout your life.

Lifelong learning also nurtures resilience and emotional intelligence. When you approach life with curiosity and openness, setbacks become opportunities rather than threats. Each failure, mistake, or rejection provides a chance to reflect, adapt, and grow stronger. As Nelson Mandela wisely said, *“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”* Each rise after a fall is a step toward mastering yourself and moving closer to your *Next Best Version* (NBV).

Another critical aspect is self-awareness. Lifelong learning helps you identify your strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. It allows you to reflect on your personal values, goals, and aspirations, ensuring that growth is aligned with your authentic self. When learning becomes a habit, you gain the clarity to make better decisions, build meaningful relationships, and lead a purposeful life.

Consider the stories of great innovators and leaders:

Elon Musk constantly explores new domains, from space technology to artificial intelligence, demonstrating that curiosity and a willingness to learn across fields lead to unprecedented breakthroughs.

Marie Curie’s relentless pursuit of knowledge, despite social and financial barriers, shows that lifelong learning can defy limits and create lasting impact.

Lifelong learning also strengthens your ability to navigate uncertainty. In a world where disruption is constant, those who are committed to learning can pivot, adapt, and thrive, rather than being paralyzed by change. This adaptability is one of the core traits that sets resilient, high-achieving individuals apart.

Finally, lifelong learning is a source of empowerment and fulfillment. The process of acquiring new skills, expanding knowledge, and achieving mastery instills confidence, purpose, and a sense of

accomplishment. It transforms life into a continuous journey of discovery, where each new experience adds value, insight, and perspective.

STRATEGIES FOR PERSONAL GROWTH

1. Set goals and challenges

Identify areas where you want to grow—professionally, emotionally, or personally—and set clear, achievable goals. Break them into smaller milestones to track progress. Goals give direction, purpose, and a sense of accomplishment as you move forward.

2. Seek out new experiences

Growth often comes from stepping outside your comfort zone. Travel, take on unfamiliar projects, learn a new skill, or engage with diverse communities. Embrace risks not as threats but as opportunities to learn and expand your perspective.

3. Practice self-reflection

Dedicate time to reflect regularly on your experiences, successes, and failures. Ask yourself: *“What worked well? What could I have done differently? What did I learn about myself?”* Reflection turns experiences into actionable lessons, creating a feedback loop for continuous improvement.

4. Surround yourself with positive influences

Your environment and the people around you shape your growth trajectory. Seek mentors, peers, and communities that challenge, inspire, and support you. Positive influences provide guidance, motivation, and diverse perspectives, accelerating your personal growth journey.

PERSONAL GROWTH – SERS MODEL

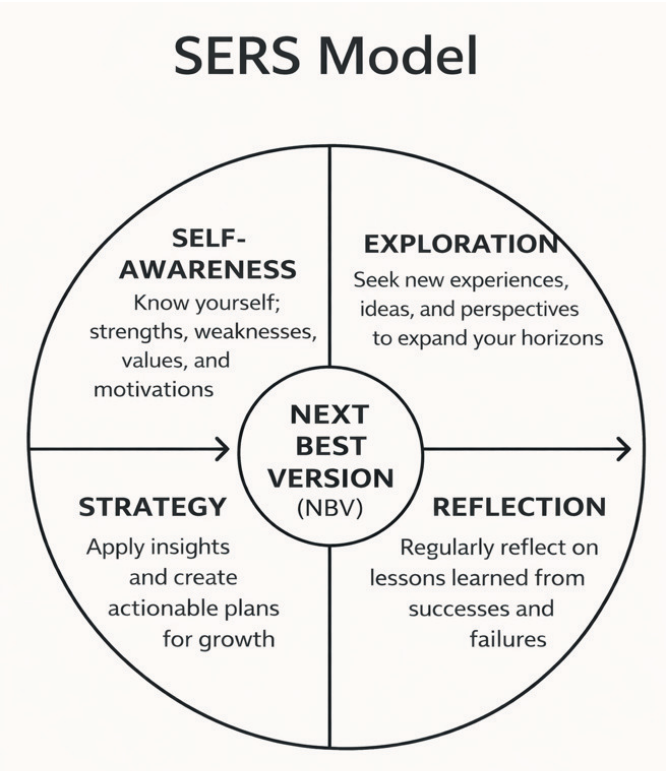
To structure personal growth, I recommend the SERS Model:

S – Self-Awareness: Understand your strengths, weaknesses, values, and motivations.

E – Exploration: Seek new experiences, ideas, and perspectives to expand your horizons.

R – Reflection: Regularly reflect on lessons learned from successes and failures.

S – Strategy: Apply insights and create actionable plans for growth.



This model provides a practical roadmap for continuous learning and growth, ensuring that knowledge is applied purposefully to achieve your *Next Best Version*.

LIFELONG LEARNING — THE ENGINE OF YOUR NEXT BEST VERSION (NBV)

“Continuous learning isn’t a task. It is an attitude—a way of walking toward your future.” — CPP

Lifelong learning is not merely about gaining knowledge. It is the way you stay relevant, the way you remain open, the way you keep moving toward the person you can become next. In a world where everything transforms—industries, skills, expectations, and opportunities—one truth remains constant:

You cannot become your *Next Best Version* without becoming a continuous learner.

Learning is not an event.

Learning is a habit.

Learning is an identity.

And at its core, learning is a mindset—an attitude that says: *“I will not allow yesterday’s knowledge to define tomorrow’s possibilities.”*

THE ESSENCE OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Continuous learning means staying curious, staying open, and staying humble enough to grow regardless of age, title, or achievement.

It is the recognition that:

- Skills expire.
- Beliefs need upgrading.
- Knowledge has a shelf life.
- Growth requires both learning and unlearning.

This journey is not only about acquiring new knowledge—it is about shedding old assumptions that no longer serve your NBV.

Most people believe learning ends with degrees or promotions. But the truth is:

Skilling is impossible without learning, and
real growth is impossible without unlearning.

Whether it is:

- Upskilling (deepening what you know)
- Cross-skilling (expanding across domains)
- New-skilling (learning future skills from scratch)
- Re-skilling (refreshing what has become out-dated)

Every form of skilling begins with the same foundation: a willingness to learn.

THE POWER OF UNLEARNING

If learning helps you grow, unlearning helps you evolve.

Unlearning is:

- Letting go of out-dated habits
- Releasing rigid beliefs
- Dropping low-value strategies
- Clearing mental space for what serves you now

In NBV philosophy, learning and unlearning form a cycle:

- Learn what moves you forward
- Unlearn what holds you back
- Relearn what aligns with your next version

Both are essential and together they create continuous NBV.

THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING MINDSET (ASK-ALIGNED)

Your lifelong learning attitude is powered by three inner drivers—aligned beautifully with the ASK principle (Attitude, Skills, Knowledge):

1. WILLINGNESS – The Attitude to Grow (A)

This is where learning begins.

Willingness is your mental openness.

It is the inner voice that says:

“I may not know this yet, but I’m willing to learn.”

Without willingness, no knowledge can enter.

Without willingness, no skill can grow.

Without willingness, no change can sustain.

Willingness is the root of all learning.

2. WANTING – The Value of Skills (S)

Wanting comes from recognising the purpose of learning.

You want to learn because:

- It makes you better
- It gives you confidence
- It opens opportunities
- It strengthens your NBV identity

When you understand the benefits of skilling—Upskill, Cross-skill, New-skill, Refresh-skill—the desire to learn becomes natural.

Skills give direction to your intention.

3. WISDOM – The Pride of Knowledge (K)

Knowledge gives you the pride of clarity.

When you learn, you:

- Make better decisions

- Communicate with confidence
- Solve problems faster
- Gain self-respect
- Feel your growth

Knowledge transforms your attitude and sharpens your skills.

It completes the learning cycle and fuels your NBV momentum.

Together:

Attitude (Willingness) → Skills (Wanting) → Knowledge (Wisdom)

This is the Continuous Learning Loop for NBV.

THE PCVC ANALOGY FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Continuous learning and PCVC share the same spirit—both ignite purposeful change.

- **Purpose:**

Why do you need to learn this? How does it relate to your NBV?

- **Connect:**

Emotionally anchor yourself to the value of learning.

Feel why it matters.

- **Visualise:**

Imagine who you will become with this new skill or knowledge.

- **Commit:**

Decide to learn, even when it is uncomfortable, slow, or challenging.

When you combine Continuous Learning with PCVC, you create a powerful engine for long-term personal evolution.

THE CONTINUOUS LEARNING & UNLEARNING FRAMEWORK (NBV MODEL)

Use this as a core concept in your chapter:

1. Attitude — I am willing

Openness, curiosity, and humility

2. Skill Value — I want to learn

Understanding the importance of learning and unlearning

3. Knowledge — I grow through learning

The pride, clarity, and empowerment that learning brings

4. Unlearning — I release what limits me

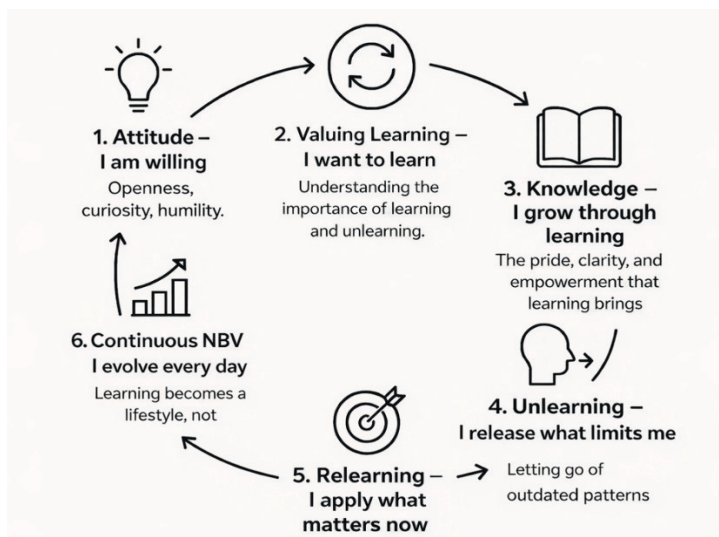
Letting go of out-dated patterns that block growth

5. Relearning — I apply what matters now

Updating your strategies for your current NBV

6. Continuous NBV — I evolve every day

Learning becomes a lifestyle, not an event.



REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

Elon Musk: His entrepreneurial journey exemplifies risk-taking and learning from failure. From the early struggles of SpaceX and Tesla to launching new ventures like Neuralink and Starship, Musk demonstrates that embracing uncertainty and continuous learning fuels innovation and success.

J.K. Rowling: Before the global success of the *Harry Potter* series, Rowling faced rejection, financial hardship, and personal challenges. Her perseverance, continuous learning, and dedication to her craft eventually led to one of the most celebrated literary franchises in history.

Satya Nadella: Microsoft's CEO transformed the company by embracing a growth mindset, promoting curiosity, and fostering a culture of continuous learning. Nadella's emphasis on empathy, experimentation, and reflection has reshaped Microsoft into a more innovative and resilient organization.

Marie Curie: A pioneer in science, Curie's commitment to learning and experimentation, even in the face of social and personal barriers, demonstrates that lifelong learning is a tool for breaking limits and creating impact.

Your Own Journey: Learning does not always have to be about fame or recognition. Daily personal experiences, failures, mentorship, and self-reflection contribute to growth. Each time you step out of your comfort zone or learn something new, you are shaping your *Next Best Version*.

By embracing lifelong learning, we cultivate curiosity, adaptability, resilience, and self-awareness. Growth is no longer a destination but a continuous journey. Every challenge, every new skill, and every reflection becomes a stepping stone toward personal mastery.

Lifelong learning is not a one-time event but a mindset—a commitment to continuously evolve, unlearn out-dated beliefs, and

embrace new perspectives. It empowers us to stay relevant, innovative, and confident in a rapidly changing world.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I reflect on my life, I realize that my passion for learning and personal growth has been the driving force behind my journey. From a very young age, I was endlessly curious about the world around me. I spent countless hours buried in books, building projects, exploring ideas, and asking questions that often went unanswered. While other children were content with the familiar, I was drawn to the unknown, fascinated by what I could discover. That curiosity became the compass guiding my journey of growth.

One of the earliest and most transformative experiences in my life was when I decided to learn a new language. I was both thrilled and terrified. The thought of stepping into a completely unfamiliar world, of making mistakes and sounding foolish, was daunting. Yet, I plunged into it with determination. Every new word, every mispronounced phrase, was a step forward, and each small success filled me with confidence.

Through learning this language, I began to see life from a different perspective. I started to appreciate the subtle power of words, the beauty of expression, and the depth of human connection. I discovered the importance of perseverance, patience, and self-discipline. Each mistake became a lesson; each challenge, an opportunity to grow. Learning this language wasn't just about acquiring a skill—it was about uncovering a part of myself I didn't know existed. It taught me to approach life with a growth mindset, to embrace curiosity, and to face challenges with courage and resilience.

Later, the journey of entrepreneurship tested and shaped my growth in profound ways. Starting my own business was a dream I had long nurtured, but the road was anything but smooth. There were setbacks, failures, and moments when self-doubt crept in like a shadow. I remember feeling overwhelmed when initial ventures didn't yield the

results I hoped for. There were days when I questioned my abilities, wondering if I was truly cut out for this path. But with every challenge, I learned to persevere, adapt, and keep moving forward.

Through entrepreneurship, I discovered the power of mentors and supportive networks. I realized that growth doesn't happen in isolation. By observing those around me—leaders, colleagues, and even competitors—I learned lessons that books could never teach. I began to view failures not as defeats, but as stepping stones toward success. Each misstep was an opportunity to reflect, adjust, and return stronger.

My journey has also been shaped by the seemingly ordinary challenges of life. Learning English as an adult, for instance, was like navigating a dense forest without a map. I practiced relentlessly, often speaking imperfect sentences and making countless mistakes. Yet, I refused to let my limitations define me. Slowly, step by step, I gained fluency, and with it, a newfound confidence. That experience reinforced a lesson I carry with me to this day: growth is often uncomfortable, but it is always worth it.

These experiences have left a lasting imprint on me. I've grown more resilient, adaptable, and self-aware. I've learned to embrace failure, trust the process, and believe in my potential. Today, as a TEDx speaker and author, I can look back at those struggles with gratitude. Each challenge, each obstacle, has shaped me into a person who not only pursues growth but also finds joy in the journey itself.

Lifelong learning has become my mantra. For me, learning is not a destination; it's a journey without end. As I always say, *"Learning is not one-time, but for a lifetime. It doesn't stop, and no one can claim they have fully learned it!"* This philosophy has taught me to stay curious, seek new experiences, and embrace challenges without fear. I've learned that growth requires discipline, reflection, and an openness to see life through fresh eyes.

I remember moments of self-doubt, heartbreak, and loss, yet each time, learning and reflection helped me rise stronger. I've discovered

that the real measure of success isn't the milestones achieved but the lessons learned along the way and the person you become through those experiences. Each failure, each small victory, is a thread in the tapestry of personal growth.

Through my journey, I've realized that personal growth is about more than acquiring knowledge. It's about transformation. It's about becoming a person who can navigate challenges with courage, embrace opportunities with curiosity, and inspire others along the way. Learning and growth are deeply personal, yet profoundly interconnected—they enrich our relationships, empower our decisions, and shape the life we lead.

I hope my story inspires you to embrace the unknown, trust yourself, and commit to the lifelong pursuit of learning and personal growth. As Nelson Mandela beautifully said, "*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.*" The journey toward your *Next Best Version* begins with curiosity, courage, and a commitment to grow every single day.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Observing and learning from the experiences of leaders and people around us can provide powerful guidance for our own growth. By paying attention to how they navigate challenges, make decisions, and inspire others, we gain insights that books or courses alone cannot provide. These lessons can shape our mindset, inform our actions, and help us develop the qualities needed to achieve our *Next Best Version* (NBV).

- **Resilience in adversity:** Watching individuals handle setbacks with composure and determination shows that failure is never final—it can be a stepping stone to growth and strength.
- **Humility and openness:** Leaders who listen, value diverse perspectives, and remain humble remind us that true learning comes from curiosity, empathy, and the willingness to learn from anyone.

- **Vision and courage:** Those who pursue bold, unconventional ideas inspire us to step beyond our comfort zones and take calculated risks to achieve meaningful outcomes.
- **Empathy and generosity:** Observing compassionate leaders demonstrates the power of uplifting others, fostering supportive networks, and building inclusive communities.
- **Consistency and discipline:** Witnessing the steady, persistent efforts of successful individuals reinforces the importance of daily habits and long-term commitment, where small actions compound into remarkable results.

By internalizing these lessons, we can enhance our personal and professional growth, build stronger relationships, and approach challenges with confidence and resilience.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Lifelong Learning & Personal Growth

1. Lifelong learning is essential for personal and professional growth.
2. Embracing challenges can lead to significant growth.
3. Self-reflection and perseverance lead to success.
4. Curiosity drives continuous learning.
5. New experiences broaden perspectives.
6. Failures are opportunities for growth.
7. Mentorship supports personal development.
8. A growth mindset builds resilience and confidence.

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CHAPTER 18:

STAYING SELF-MOTIVATED AND FOCUSED ON YOUR NBV JOURNEY

Staying self-motivated and focused is one of the most critical skills on your journey to your *Next Best Version* (NBV). Motivation fuels your persistence, even when the path is steep, while focus ensures that every ounce of energy is directed toward meaningful action. In this chapter, we explore strategies, real-life examples, and personal experiences that can help you sustain motivation, stay resilient, and achieve your goals.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-MOTIVATION

Self-motivation is the inner engine that keeps you moving forward when external validation or rewards are absent. It transforms goals from ideas into tangible results. As Nelson Mandela said, “*The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.*” Motivation is not about avoiding failure; it’s about learning from it, growing from it, and using it as fuel to propel yourself toward your NBV.

For me, self-motivation has always been fueled by three key forces: purpose, curiosity, and the desire to continuously improve. Whenever I encounter setbacks or moments of self-doubt, I remind myself why I started. Reflecting on my purpose—whether personal growth, supporting my family, or creating value for others—strengthens my focus and resilience. Curiosity keeps the process engaging and the desire to improve ensures that I don’t settle for mediocrity.

Self-motivation also helps you navigate life’s unpredictability. There are times when external circumstances are challenging—financial difficulties, career setbacks, or personal losses. Without internal

drive, it's easy to feel stuck. But motivation allows you to see opportunities, find creative solutions, and keep moving forward even when progress seems slow.

STRATEGIES FOR STAYING MOTIVATED

1. Set Clear Goals

Clarity is power. Break your NBV goals into smaller, measurable, and achievable steps. Overwhelming ambitions become actionable plans when they are divided into digestible tasks. For instance, if your goal is to enhance leadership skills, you can break it into attending workshops, reading leadership books, practicing delegation, and seeking mentorship. Clear goals act as a roadmap and give you milestones to celebrate.

2. Create a Positive Environment

Surround yourself with supportive people, inspiring resources, and environments that fuel growth. Your environment has a profound effect on your motivation. Toxic influences can sap energy and diminish focus, while positive, empowering spaces can elevate performance. Seek communities, mentors, and friends who encourage you, provide feedback, and celebrate progress with you.

3. Celebrate Small Wins

Motivation is reinforced when achievements are recognized. No win is too small. Each step forward, each lesson learned, and each challenge overcome is progress. Personally, I celebrate small milestones from finishing a challenging book to completing a significant project at work. Recognizing small wins fuels confidence and inspires sustained effort.

4. Stay Accountable

Sharing your goals with mentors, friends, or peers creates a system of accountability. Knowing that someone else is invested in your progress makes you more committed to taking consistent action. I've

personally relied on mentors and trusted colleagues who would check in regularly, ask questions, and provide guidance when needed.

5. Visualize the Outcome

Visualization is a powerful motivator. Picture yourself achieving your goals, and let the positive emotions associated with success energize you. Visualization aligns your subconscious mind with your objectives, strengthens self-belief, and enhances focus. Athletes, entrepreneurs, and leaders often use this technique to mentally rehearse challenges and prepare for success.

6. Build Daily Motivation Habits

Motivation is not a one-time surge; it’s a habit. Journaling, affirmations, meditation, or reflective thinking are simple yet effective ways to reinforce your focus daily. I dedicate time each morning to reflect on my purpose, my priorities for the day, and my NBV goals. These small rituals create momentum and help maintain consistent energy toward achieving my aspirations.



THE FOCUS MODEL FOR SELF-MOTIVATION

To make self-motivation actionable, I developed the FOCUS Model, a structured framework to help you sustain motivation and clarity on your NBV journey:

F – Frame Your Purpose: Clarify why your goals matter to you. Understanding the deeper purpose behind your goals transforms effort into meaningful action. For example, if your goal is career growth, connecting it to the ability to support family or make an impact makes motivation sustainable.

O – Organize Your Steps: Break down goals into practical, achievable steps. Create an actionable roadmap with milestones and checkpoints. For me, structuring tasks into daily, weekly, and monthly targets has made even the most ambitious projects feel achievable.

C – Connect to Inspiration: Surround yourself with mentors, stories, and experiences that inspire action. Inspiration is a catalyst for sustained energy. I often revisit biographies of leaders like Nelson Mandela or Elon Musk to renew my drive.

U – Understand Progress: Regularly track and measure achievements. This feedback loop helps you adjust strategies, celebrate progress, and stay motivated. Journals, spreadsheets, or reflection notes can be powerful tools to understand your growth over time.

S – Sustain Momentum: Build habits and celebrate progress to maintain focus. Motivation is maintained not through sporadic effort but through consistent, deliberate action. Celebrate achievements, no matter how small, and use them as fuel to keep going.

The FOCUS Model for Self-Motivation



The FOCUS Model ensures that motivation is not fleeting—it is structured, sustainable, and directly aligned with achieving your NBV.

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

J.K. Rowling: Despite facing multiple rejections and personal hardships, her perseverance led to the creation of the globally beloved *Harry Potter* series.

Stephen Curry: Overcame early career doubts and injuries, leveraging discipline and focus to become one of the NBA’s greatest shooters.

Elon Musk: Continually takes calculated risks and learns from failures, using motivation and focus to drive innovation in SpaceX and Tesla.

These examples show that self-motivation is not innate—it is cultivated, nurtured, and sustained through habits, reflection, and deliberate focus.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I reflect on my journey of discovering my *Next Best Version* (NBV), I realize that staying self-motivated and focused has been the invisible thread weaving together every milestone of my life. Motivation, I've learned, is not just about doing—it's about believing, even when the path seems unclear. It's the inner voice that whispers, "*Keep going, even when you feel like stopping.*"

Growing up, my curiosity was insatiable. I would spend hours reading, building small projects, and exploring ideas that fascinated me. What seemed like simple hobbies at the time became the seeds of resilience, creativity, and self-discipline. Over the years, my curiosity evolved into a passion for philosophy, psychology, and creative expression. But passion alone isn't enough—without focus, energy dissipates into distraction. Learning to harness my drive became a life-long practice.

One of the most defining moments in my journey came when I decided to start my own business. Entrepreneurship felt like stepping into a storm: exciting, daunting, and uncertain. I faced setbacks, rejections, and moments when I questioned my own abilities. In those moments, I discovered a simple truth: failure is not final, but giving up is. Each challenge taught me to persevere, adapt, and embrace the discomfort of growth.

To stay motivated, I developed strategies that became my anchors:

- **Goal-setting:** Breaking my dreams into actionable, measurable steps gave me clarity. Even a small step forward felt like progress, reinforcing my momentum.
- **Positive self-talk:** I learned to speak kindly to myself, reminding myself that *“Every effort counts, even if it feels small.”* Affirmations became tools of self-belief.
- **Accountability:** Sharing my goals with trusted friends, mentors, and colleagues provided guidance and gentle nudges, keeping me honest and committed.
- **Celebrating small wins:** Each milestone, no matter how minor, became a cause for acknowledgment. Progress is a series of small victories, and I learned to honour each one.

I have vivid memories of moments when discouragement threatened to halt my journey. I recall times when I felt invisible, when no one around me seemed to understand the risk I was taking or the passion I carried. And then I reminded myself: *“You don’t fail if you start; you fail only when you don’t try.”* – a mantra that carried me through uncertainty and self-doubt.

One story that continues to inspire me is the tale of a group of frogs in a climbing competition. As they attempted to scale a tall tower, the crowd shouted discouragement. Most frogs gave up, but one continued, deaf to the negativity around him. That frog’s persistence reminds me daily that focus and determination often require us to tune out the noise and trust our own path.

Staying self-motivated isn’t just about chasing goals—it’s about connecting deeply to your purpose. It’s about waking up every day with intention and aligning your energy with what matters most. Motivation is a practice, not a one-time surge. It’s choosing to rise after setbacks, to take action when fear whispers *“stop,”* and to nurture your dreams even when the road feels long.

Today, as I look back, I see a tapestry of curiosity, resilience, and courage woven through my experiences. I’ve grown through failures,

celebrated progress, and learned to trust myself. I've realized that motivation is contagious: when you stay committed to your growth, you inspire others to do the same.

To readers of all ages and walks of life: Your journey is uniquely yours, but the principles are universal. Stay curious, set your intentions, embrace setbacks as lessons, and celebrate every small victory. As Tony Robbins says, *"The past does not equal the future unless you live there."* Let this be your reminder: your next step, however small, is the one that propels you toward your NBV.

No matter where you start, no matter the obstacles, the power to stay motivated and focused lies within you. Trust yourself, commit to your journey, and remember: your NBV is waiting for you—one conscious, determined step at a time.

LESSONS LEARNT FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Observing leaders, mentors, and people who inspire us can provide practical guidance for staying self-motivated and focused on our journey toward the *Next Best Version* (NBV). Their behaviors, mindsets, and strategies offer lessons that can be applied by anyone seeking growth, resilience, and clarity of purpose.

Key lessons include:

- **Resilience in adversity:** Leaders who face challenges with calm, perseverance, and optimism teach us that setbacks are part of the journey. The takeaway for you: treat obstacles as learning opportunities, not failures.
- **Purpose-driven action:** Those who align their actions with a clear sense of purpose demonstrate the power of direction. For NBV seekers, clarify why your goals matter. This will fuel motivation and sustain focus when challenges arise.

- **Courage to act:** Leaders who take calculated risks despite fear inspire action over hesitation. The lesson: don't let fear delay progress; step forward with confidence and trust your abilities.
- **Consistency and discipline:** Observing individuals who achieve extraordinary results through daily habits highlights the importance of routine. The advice: develop consistent practices that reinforce focus and momentum in your NBV journey.
- **Empathy and collaboration:** Leaders who uplift others and build supportive networks show the value of community. Lesson for you: surround yourself with people who motivate, support, and challenge you positively.
- **Reflection and learning mindset:** Leaders who continuously reflect, seek feedback, and adapt demonstrate the importance of self-awareness. Takeaway: regularly evaluate your progress, adjust strategies, and celebrate growth.

By internalizing these lessons, you gain practical guidance for cultivating self-motivation, focus, and perseverance, creating a roadmap for your own NBV journey. The behaviors and mindsets of those around you act as both inspiration and actionable advice, showing that the journey toward NBV is as much about learning from others as it is about your own effort.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. **Self-motivation is essential** – It drives progress on your NBV journey.
2. **Set clear goals** – Break them into achievable steps to maintain focus.
3. **Celebrate small wins** – Reinforce positive habits and build momentum.
4. **Visualize outcomes** – Imagine success to strengthen belief and align your actions.

5. **Daily motivation habits** – Journaling, affirmations, and meditation reinforce consistency.
6. **Resilience matters** – Bouncing back from setbacks keeps you on track.
7. **Learn from mentors and role models** – Draw inspiration and guidance from others' experiences.
8. **Take ownership** – Accountability empowers action and progress.
9. **Ignore negativity** – Maintain focus by filtering out distractions and discouragement.
10. **Consistency and discipline** – Small, persistent actions lead to long-term achievement.

By staying self-motivated and focused, you can achieve success on your NBV journey and live a more fulfilling life. As Tony Robbins said, *"The past does not equal the future unless you live there."*

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CHAPTER 19:

OVERCOMING PLATEAUS AND SETBACKS ON YOUR NBV JOURNEY

WHEN THE JOURNEY BECOMES STILL

The journey toward your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is a living process—dynamic, unpredictable, and deeply human. Some days feel like breakthroughs. Some days feel like chaos. And some days feel like nothing moves at all.

Yet in the NBV philosophy, the moments that seem still, stuck, or shattered are often the most transformative.

Progress in life does not travel in straight lines. It spirals. It bends. It pauses. It tests you. It stretches you. It throws you into seasons where every step feels heavy. These moments are not detours—they are designs. They shape your inner scaffolding, refine your identity, strengthen your resilience, and prepare you for a version of yourself that smooth days could never build.

As I often remind myself:

“Setbacks are not signals to stop; they are stepping stones god places to build your next best version.” – CPP

This chapter explores that truth.

SETBACKS: THE SECRET ARCHITECTS OF YOUR EVOLUTION

Setbacks are rarely pleasant, but they are profoundly powerful.

They reveal things that success never could:

- Who you really are without comfort

- What your true strengths and weaknesses are
- Who walks with you: friends, family, workplace, or society
- What beliefs need to be unlearned
- What emotional patterns rise under pressure
- What inner wisdom wants to emerge
- What leadership potential lies dormant inside you

Only in tough times do you discover the truth of yourself.

Not in celebrations. Not in smooth seasons.

Only in the furnace of challenge does your true character appear.

Your self-awareness expands.

Your resilience sharpens.

Your wisdom deepens.

Your thinking matures.

This is why, in NBV, setbacks are not interruptions—they are activators.

They activate:

- Reflection
- Reinvention
- Reawakening
- Redirection
- Resilience
- Renewal

The process feels breaking, but in reality, it is building.



WHY SETBACKS ACTUALLY PROTECT YOU

When you hit a wall, it is often life's way of saying:

- “This version of you cannot take you to the next level.”
- “You need a deeper skill, a broader mindset, or a wiser approach.”
- “Pause here. There is learning to collect.”
- “Grow before you go.”

NBV is built on three truths:

1. Every setback carries a hidden upgrade

Life takes away what no longer serves you to make space for what will.

2. Every plateau holds a silent message

You are asked to reset, rethink, realign.

3. Every challenge pushes you toward a version of yourself you would not reach otherwise

Comfort never teaches what adversity reveals.

THE HORSE VS. ELEPHANT RESPONSE—A RESILIENCE PARABLE

When life knocks you down, you have two choices:

Be the Horse

A horse stumbles, falls, but rises instantly: quick, agile, and energetic.

It shakes off the dust and continues running.

Be the Elephant

An elephant falls heavily.

It's very weight makes rising slow and difficult.

It takes time, hesitation, and effort to stand again.

The NBV way is to be the horse:

- Rise quickly
- Learn quickly
- Adapt quickly
- Return to the journey quickly

Because life rewards resilience speed.

Your ability to bounce back determines how far you go.

THE MARATHON OF LIFE—WHY STARTING FIRST DOES NOT MATTER

Many feel discouraged seeing others ahead. But life is not a 100-metre dash.

Life is a marathon: long, unpredictable, and full of terrain shifts.

In a marathon:

- Starting early means nothing
- Starting late means nothing
- Running steady means everything
- Finishing strong means everything

You can build your stamina anytime:

- Skills
- Knowledge
- Maturity
- Experience
- Emotional intelligence
- Mindset

You can always catch up.

You can always grow.

You can always win.

As I often say:

“In life’s marathon, you don’t lose because you started late. You lose only if you stop running.” — CPP

UNDERSTANDING PLATEAUS—WHEN PROGRESS PAUSES WITH PURPOSE

A plateau is not failure.

A plateau is a signal—a pause designed to serve you.

What is a plateau?

It is a period where you feel like you’re moving, but nothing is shifting.

You’re doing the work, but the needle stays still.

Why do plateaus happen?

1. Emotional Fatigue – You’ve been pushing too long without renewal.
2. Skill Gap – You need a new capability to move to the next level.
3. Misalignment – Your values and actions need recalibration.
4. Lack of Reflection – The old method no longer works.
5. Life’s Timing – Sometimes, you are being asked to pause for protection.

Why plateaus are necessary:

- They slow you down for deeper reflection
- They prevent burnout
- They trigger creativity
- They reveal hidden parts of yourself
- They force reinvention
- They prepare you for a breakthrough

Many great innovations in history—from rockets to art to spiritual philosophies—were born during periods of stagnation.

Plateaus are not empty spaces; they are incubation spaces.

“You are never shaped in your comfort. You evolve only when life introduces you to your own depth.” — CPP

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME PLATEAUS & SETBACKS

1. Identify the root cause

Every stagnation has a deeper reason.

Is it burnout? Skill gap? Wrong direction? Emotional overload?

Clarity is the first step to breakthrough.

2. Seek new perspectives

Fresh lenses from mentors, peers, coaches, and trusted people reveal blind spots.

A single question from the right person can unlock years of confusion.

3. Take deliberate breaks

Rest is strategic, not lazy.

Walks in nature, silence, meditation, music, journaling—these reset your creative and emotional system.

4. Journal & reflect

Reflection is a core NBV principle.

Write your struggles, your learnings, your fears, and your insights.

Reflection transforms chaos into clarity.

5. Celebrate small wins

Progress is made of tiny victories.

Recognizing them rewires your brain for motivation and momentum.

6. Stay flexible—adapt

Every plateau requires a new mindset.

Rigidity prolongs stagnation.

Flexibility accelerates growth.

7. Rise like the horse

When you fall, get up quickly.

Your bounce-back time shapes your destiny.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

This very book—*Finding Your NBV*—was born not from inspiration, but from a plateau that later revealed itself as a turning point.

Months before I began writing, I felt a creative fire burning inside me.

Ideas flowed effortlessly. Vision was clear. Energy was high.

Then one morning, the flow stopped. Completely.

I sat at my desk for hours, staring at a blank document.

Words that once danced now disappeared.

The excitement turned into frustration.

Frustration into self-doubt.

Self-doubt into emotional exhaustion.

Days passed.

Then weeks.

I felt stuck—painfully stuck.

Questions attacked me:

- “*Am I losing my touch?*”
- “*Did I imagine this book?*”
- “*Maybe I am not meant to write this.*”

My mind, usually my ally, became my critic.

My confidence, usually strong, became fragile.

I tried pushing through. Nothing came.

I tried motivating myself. It didn’t work.

I tried changing routines. Still stuck.

Finally, I stopped.

I stepped away.

I went for long walks.

I breathed deeply.

I allowed silence to speak.

I reconnected with nature, with mentors, and with myself.

I practiced yoga, meditation, and reflection.

I journaled my fears and frustrations.

Slowly, clarity emerged.

I realized the problem wasn’t lack of skill—it was burnout, not incapability.

My mind needed rest.

My soul needed space.

My creativity needed breathing room.

And then, one morning, something magical happened.

I opened my laptop again.

The words didn't just return,

they poured out with a force I had never experienced before.

The chapter that once paralyzed me became the chapter that liberated me.

The story evolved in ways I never planned.

The NBV concept deepened.

The philosophy matured.

And this book, this very book—took a new shape, a richer voice, and a stronger soul.

That setback was my catalyst.

That plateau was my awakening.

That silence was my teacher.

And today, as I write these words, I know one truth:

“Setbacks are reflective pauses, not dead ends. They are invitations to return as a deeper, wiser, more powerful version of yourself.”

– CPP

This book exists because I fell, paused, listened, grew—and rose.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Observation and reflection on inspiring figures provide guidance for navigating plateaus:

- **Resilience in adversity:** Leaders who remain calm under pressure demonstrate that setbacks are temporary and teachable.

- **Strategic pauses:** Many successful entrepreneurs, like Steve Jobs, took time to reflect before making major decisions—a critical step to overcoming plateaus.
- **Mentorship matters:** Observing leaders leveraging networks shows the power of support in sustaining focus and motivation.
- **Celebrate incremental progress:** High achievers recognize that every small improvement compounds over time.
- **Adaptability and learning:** Leaders often pivot strategies when faced with unforeseen challenges, illustrating the importance of flexibility.

THE POWER OF REFLECTION AND SELF-CARE

Reflection and self-care are more than just wellness practices—they are tools for action. They allow you to:

1. Gain clarity on your challenges
2. Recharge energy and enthusiasm
3. Reset priorities and approach
4. Transform setbacks into learning opportunities

As I've experienced, stepping away does not mean giving up—it means preparing to return stronger and wiser.

RIISING INTO YOUR NEXT BEST VERSION

Setbacks build wisdom.

Plateaus build clarity.

Challenges build character.

Reflection builds maturity.

Resilience builds leadership.

Adaptability builds longevity.

NBV builds YOU.

Your journey will not always be smooth,

but it will always be meaningful.

You will fall.

You will stop.

You will question everything.

But these moments will create the most extraordinary parts of you.

Because the NBV path is not about perfection,

It is about evolution.

And every evolution begins with a disruption.

Your setbacks are shaping you.

Your plateaus are preparing you.

Your challenges are refining you.

You are rising—slowly, steadily, powerfully—into your *Next Best Version*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Overcoming Plateaus And Setbacks

1. **Perseverance is essential** – Obstacles are opportunities in disguise.
2. **Identify root causes** – Understand why progress has stalled.
3. **Seek new perspectives** – Learn from mentors, peers, and role models.
4. **Reflection fuels growth** – Pause, assess, and gain clarity.
5. **Self-care is strategic** – Rest, recharge, and maintain focus.
6. **Celebrate incremental progress** – Small wins build momentum.
7. **Flexibility and adaptability** – Pivot strategies when needed.

8. **Resilience transforms setbacks** – Learn and grow from failures.
9. **Continuous learning from experience** – Every plateau teaches a lesson.
10. **Support networks matter** – Mentors and peers enhance motivation and accountability.

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CHAPTER 20:

SUSTAINING AND GROWING YOUR NBV FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS

Achieving your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is a beautiful milestone, but sustaining it, deepening it, and growing it over time is where true mastery lies.

Becoming your NBV is not a one-time transformation. It is a lifelong partnership with your evolving self. It requires alignment, consistency, curiosity, and conscious reflection. It demands the discipline to continue becoming better, even when excitement fades, distractions increase, or life shifts.

As I often remind myself:

“Sustainability in growth is not about speed—it’s about alignment.” — CPP

The NBV journey is not a sprint. It is a rhythm—one that moves through phases of discovery, practice, reflection, renewal, and reinvention. Many people work hard to achieve a breakthrough, but only a few learn how to keep growing beyond it. This chapter is about becoming one of those few.

THE DEEPER PURPOSE OF SUSTAINING GROWTH

Short bursts of change are common. People read a book, attend a seminar, or get inspired after a life event, and initiate a new habit or mindset. But true transformation is not found in these short peaks. It is built through integration through the repeated reinforcement of your new identity until it becomes your natural way of living.

NBV is not who you are for a moment.

NBV is who you choose to remain—every day, through conscious action.

Sustainability matters because:

- Growth without consistency becomes accidental.
- Change without reinforcement becomes temporary.
- Success without alignment becomes stressful.
- Momentum without clarity becomes directionless.

Your evolution needs to be nurtured, protected, and sustained like a living ecosystem. Without this care, even meaningful breakthroughs can fade.

THE POWER OF MOMENTUM—CONTINUITY OVER INTENSITY

Many people expect growth to come from big actions. But NBV teaches that long-term transformation depends far more on continuity than intensity.

A small habit done daily is more powerful than a big action done occasionally.

A small step taken consistently builds more change than a giant leap taken once.

Momentum is the invisible force that keeps your NBV alive.

It:

- Reduces resistance
- Builds confidence
- Compounds small gains
- Stabilizes your emotional energy
- Protects your identity from slipping back
- Keeps you progressing even on low-motivation days

Momentum is not about working harder—it is about staying aligned. Even if you take small steps, you keep moving forward.

THE MINDSET REQUIRED FOR LONG-TERM NBV

To sustain and grow your NBV, you must adopt the mindset of long-game thinkers—people who build legacies, not flashes of brilliance.

1. “I strive to become slightly better every day.”

Not perfect.

Not extraordinary.

Just better.

2. “My identity drives my habits, and my habits protect my identity.”

Once you become your NBV, daily routines must reinforce it.

3. “I will recalibrate without guilt.”

Growth needs periodic resets—pauses to check direction, values, and alignment.

4. “I choose discipline over mood.”

Motivation fades.

Identity stays.

5. “I embrace lifelong learning.”

Your NBV is never a final version; it is a continuous versioning process.

When these beliefs become part of who you are, sustaining growth becomes natural.

THE HUMAN TENDENCY TO DRIFT—AND HOW TO AVOID IT

Every human drifts. It is natural.

- You begin strong but slow down
- You stay committed but get distracted
- You grow but relax into old comfort zones

This drift is not failure—it is biology and psychology.

The key is not to prevent drift, but to detect it early and return quickly.

If you do not consciously nurture your NBV,

you unconsciously return to your OBV—your Old Best Version.

Reflection, accountability, and alignment protect you from drifting back into patterns that no longer serve your growth.

STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

1. Set new goals continuously

Every achievement creates a psychological vacuum.

Fill it intentionally.

Once you reach a milestone, define the next level.

Goals offer direction, structure, and a sense of purpose.

The moment you stop setting goals, your momentum slows.

Growth thrives on challenge—not pressure, but progression.

2. Accountability creates drive

Accountability is momentum insurance.

Whether it's a mentor, a peer, a coach, or a community—having someone who tracks your progress keeps your NBV alive.

Accountability:

- strengthens commitment
- reduces drift
- corrects blind spots
- encourages discipline
- reinforces identity

When others see your potential, you rise to meet it.

3. Celebrate milestones

Celebration is not indulgence—it is reinforcement.

Every milestone, even small ones, tells your mind:

“I am progressing. I am capable. I am evolving.”

This internal validation fuels motivation and anchors your new identity.

Success is sustained not by big achievements,

but by repeatedly recognizing the small wins along the way.

4. Stay curious and keep learning

Curiosity is one of the strongest engines of long-term growth.

When you stay curious:

- you remain open-minded
- you stay relevant
- you adapt faster
- you innovate naturally
- you avoid stagnation

Learning keeps your mind young, flexible, and free of ego.

It ensures your NBV continues evolving.

5. Reflect and recalibrate regularly

Reflection is the compass of the NBV journey.

Without reflection, you may move fast, but in the wrong direction.

Reflection helps you:

- assess your progress
- recognize your evolution
- identify blind spots
- eliminate what no longer serves you
- recommit to what matters
- realign your life with your purpose

Recalibration prevents drift and reminds you that growth is dynamic.

STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINING MOMENTUM



**Set New Goals
Continuously**



**Accountability
Creates Drive**



**Celebrate
Milestones**



**Stay Curious and
Keep Learning**



**Reflect and
Recalibrate Regularly**

THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF SUSTAINABLE NBV

Long-term growth is not only mental and behavioral—it is deeply spiritual.

To sustain your NBV, you must:

- Listen to your intuition
- Stay anchored in values
- Practice gratitude
- Maintain humility
- Protect your energy
- Honour your inner wisdom

When your inner world remains aligned, your outer world becomes easier to navigate.

Sustainability is ultimately an act of self-respect.

You sustain what you value.

You protect what you honour.

You nurture what you love.

Your NBV is a sacred relationship with the person you are becoming.

THE ABCD MINDSET: SUSTAINING YOUR NBV FOR THE LONG-TERM

Achieving your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not a one-time effort—it's a lifelong journey. Even after reaching milestones, the challenge is to maintain momentum, continue learning, and grow sustainably. To help guide this process, I developed the ABCD mindset, a practical framework for sustaining focus, motivation, and resilience on your NBV journey.

Each element of ABCD represents a principle that supports long-term growth and ensures your efforts remain aligned with your goals:

A – Action

Momentum is created by consistent, deliberate action. Progress comes not from intentions alone, but from translating plans into daily behaviors. Taking action—even small steps—ensures that you keep moving forward, even during challenging phases.

B – Belief

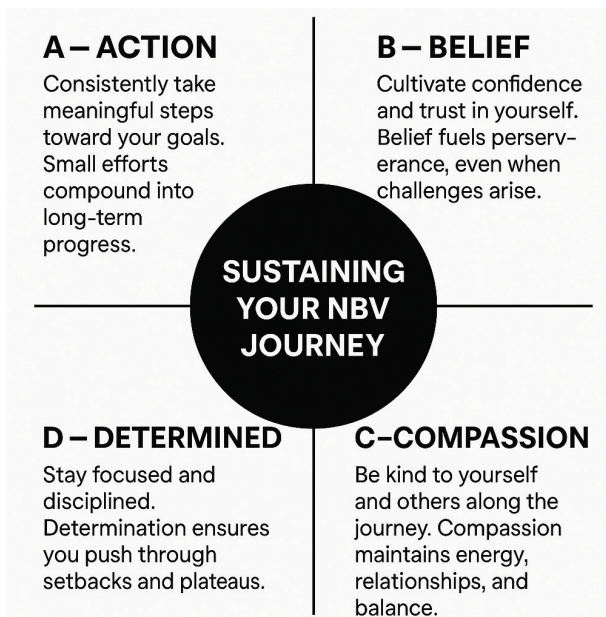
Your growth depends on trust in your own abilities. Belief fuels perseverance and helps you overcome self-doubt and external obstacles. Maintaining confidence in your vision enables you to stay committed through setbacks and plateaus.

C – Compassion

Sustainable growth requires compassion, both for yourself and others. Recognizing your limits, forgiving mistakes, and treating yourself kindly prevents burnout. Compassion also fosters positive relationships and collaboration, enriching your NBV journey.

D – Determined

Determination is the steady force that keeps you moving toward your NBV, regardless of difficulties. It's about commitment, discipline, and resilience—continuing to pursue your goals with focus and purpose even when the path is challenging.



Why ABCD Matters:

By embracing the ABCD mindset, you create a framework that not only helps you achieve goals but also ensures that growth is sustainable. It turns short-term successes into long-term progress and transforms challenges into opportunities for development. This mindset empowers you to stay focused, motivated, and resilient on your journey toward your *Next Best Version*.

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINED GROWTH

Elon Musk: Musk’s ability to sustain momentum across multiple ventures, from SpaceX to Tesla, demonstrates how consistent action, curiosity, and belief in one’s vision drive long-term success.

LeBron James: His dedication to daily training, mental preparation, and self-improvement has allowed him to maintain peak performance for decades.

Marie Curie: Despite societal challenges and repeated setbacks, her persistence in research led to ground-breaking scientific discoveries.

J.K. Rowling: Her perseverance in refining her writing and handling multiple rejections eventually created the globally celebrated the *Harry Potter* series.

Sustaining and growing your NBV requires consistent action, accountability, curiosity, and reflection. By embracing the ABCD mindset, setting ongoing goals, and continuously learning, you ensure that your personal and professional growth does not plateau. Momentum is built through small, persistent steps, and growth is sustained by adaptability, perseverance, and clarity of purpose.

Your NBV journey is lifelong—every milestone achieved is an opportunity to set a new direction, reach higher, and leave a lasting impact.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I reflect on my journey of finding my *Next Best Version* (NBV), I realize that sustaining momentum has been one of the most challenging—and yet, most rewarding—parts of my growth. When I first embarked on this journey, I was filled with excitement, ambition, and a sense of purpose. Every day felt like a new opportunity, every milestone a step closer to realizing my dreams. But as time passed, there were moments when the energy waned, and progress seemed painfully slow.

I remember times when it felt like I was running on a treadmill, putting in effort but barely moving forward. Projects stalled, ideas seemed stagnant, and self-doubt crept in. I asked myself, *Am I really capable? Is this worth it?* The frustration and uncertainty were overwhelming. I felt lost at times, unsure whether my efforts would ever bear fruit.

Yet, in those moments, I discovered something profound: sustaining momentum isn't about speed—it's about mindset. It's about learning to keep moving forward, even when the path seems unclear. I realized that every small action, every tiny step, contributes to long-term growth.

“Small steps lead to big milestones; milestones lead to exciting destinations. Reaching faster gives a kick—you beat your own time and stay ahead of your expectations.” — CPP

There were times when I had to pause completely. During one particularly intense project—a creative writing piece I had poured my heart into—I found myself completely stuck. Words wouldn’t come. Inspiration seemed distant. I questioned my talent, my purpose, even my worth. At first, I pushed through, thinking sheer willpower would carry me forward. But exhaustion and burnout had taken hold.

It was in stepping back that I found clarity. I allowed myself to rest, to focus on other areas of life, to reconnect with loved ones, nature, and small joys that had been neglected. And when I returned to the project, something magical happened. I approached it with fresh eyes, renewed energy, and new ideas that had never occurred to me before. That moment taught me a crucial lesson: momentum can be restored, but it requires self-care, reflection, and patience.

Sustaining momentum has also been about celebrating the little victories along the way. I began to notice the small wins I had previously overlooked: finishing a challenging task, overcoming a fear, or simply staying consistent on a tough day. Each of these became fuel for the next step, creating a rhythm that carried me forward.

“Every small win matters. Every step forward is progress. Momentum is built, one deliberate action at a time.” — CPP

Another realization was the thrill of progress itself. Achieving a goal faster than expected, exceeding my own benchmarks, or simply mastering a skill gave me a sense of exhilaration. It was like a personal victory dance, a reminder that I was capable of more than I had imagined. This excitement became a powerful motivator, propelling me to continue striving, learning, and growing.

Over time, I understood that sustaining momentum isn’t just about pushing forward; it’s about creating a lifestyle aligned with your

values, passions, and purpose. It's about developing habits that keep energy high, curiosity alive, and focus sharp. It's about building a life where growth is continuous, challenges are embraced, and achievements—no matter how small—are celebrated.

Looking back, I can see that my journey of sustaining momentum has been a series of lessons:

- Momentum is a mindset, not a measure of speed.
- Rest and self-care are not luxuries—they are essential for sustainable progress.
- Small steps, celebrated milestones, and consistent effort create long-term results.
- Progress is addictive; once you experience it, it fuels the next step.
- Growth never stops; curiosity and openness keep the journey alive.

Through all the highs and lows, I've learned that finding your NBV is not just about achieving goals—it's about embracing a journey of continuous momentum, learning, and growth. I continue to nurture this mindset every day, excited by the possibilities ahead and committed to making the most of every opportunity.

"Sustaining momentum is the bridge between ambition and achievement. Keep moving, keep learning, and never underestimate the power of small, consistent steps." — CPP

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND

Observing leaders and people around us offers practical lessons for sustaining momentum and growing continuously. Here are key takeaways you can apply to your NBV journey:

- **Resilience in Action:** Leaders who persist through challenges demonstrate that momentum isn't about never facing setbacks—

it's about rising, learning, and moving forward. Even small, consistent actions compound into long-term growth.

- **Purpose-Driven Focus:** People who align their daily efforts with a clear purpose maintain energy and direction. Understanding why you do what you do keep you motivated, even when progress seems slow.
- **Consistency over Intensity:** High performers often emphasize regular, deliberate effort rather than sporadic bursts. Momentum is built through habits, routines, and disciplined follow-through.
- **Celebrating Progress:** Leaders and peers who acknowledge small wins reinforce motivation and encourage continued effort. Recognizing incremental progress helps maintain engagement over the long term.
- **Openness to Learning:** Observing successful individuals show that curiosity and adaptability are critical. Seeking feedback, exploring new ideas, and being willing to adjust strategies help sustain growth.
- **Inspiring Others:** People who sustain their momentum often lift those around them, creating a culture of motivation and collaboration. Supporting and encouraging others reinforces your own drive and purpose.

THE EVOLUTION NEVER ENDS

Sustaining and growing your NBV is a commitment to lifelong evolution.

It is not about staying in motion constantly.

It is about moving with intention.

It is about aligning your identity with your actions.

It is about learning, adapting, and renewing yourself regularly.

It is about building systems, habits, and mindsets that support your long-term growth.

Your NBV does not end here—it deepens, expands, and continues evolving with you.

The goal is not to become perfect.

The goal is to remain in progress.

And as long as you stay aligned—you will always grow into your *Next Best Version*.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Sustaining momentum is essential for achieving long-term success.
2. Setting new goals helps maintain direction and challenge growth.
3. Accountability drives consistent effort and commitment.
4. Celebrating milestones fuels motivation and acknowledges progress.
5. Maintaining curiosity encourages continuous learning and adaptation.
6. Perseverance and adaptability are key to growth and improvement.

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SECTION 5:
HELPING OTHERS FIND THEIR NBV
& LEAVING A LEGACY

CHAPTER 21:

UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL WITH SIMPLICITY

"Complexity wins minds, but simplicity wins hearts." – CPP

THE POWER OF SIMPLICITY

In earlier chapters, we explored how positive relationships form the environment for growth. Yet the clarity to act on that growth comes from within—through simplicity.

In a world overflowing with information, strategies, and self-help formulas, the path to personal growth often appears complicated. But in reality, transformation doesn't require endless tools or overwhelming systems—it requires clarity.

Think of nature: the sun rises and sets, water flows, a seed grows into a tree. The processes are profoundly powerful yet strikingly simple. In the same way, when you strip away noise and focus on what truly matters, you discover that simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.

Unlocking your potential doesn't come from chasing everything—it comes from focusing on the few things that matter most. That is where the concept of MEGO comes in.

MEGO: SIMPLICITY IN ACTION

MEGO is a simple yet transformative framework that captures the essence of personal growth in just four principles. It proves that unlocking your potential doesn't have to be complex—you just need the right compass.

MEGO stands for:

M – Metanoia: A shift in mindset.

E – Epiphany: A breakthrough realization.

G – Gumption: The courage to act.

O – Omnifariousness: Embracing diverse experiences.

Together, these four simple forces form a cycle of growth that can guide you toward your *Next Best Version* (NBV).

METANOIA (M): SIMPLICITY IN TRANSFORMATION

Metanoia is about a deep change in mindset. It's realizing that your thoughts shape your world. Often, people overcomplicate change by seeking endless techniques. But transformation begins simply, with a decision to shift perspective.

As Aristotle said, *"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."*

Simplicity here means choosing habits that align with your NBV and repeating them until they reshape your identity.

EPIPHANY (E): SIMPLICITY IN REALIZATION

An epiphany is a sudden moment of clarity. While people often spend years searching for answers in books, seminars, and courses, one simple realization can change everything.

Steve Jobs put it well, *"Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith."*

Epiphanies cut through complexity. They strip away what doesn't matter and spotlight what does, making the path forward obvious and simple.

GUMPTION (G): SIMPLICITY IN COURAGE

Courage is often mistaken as something extraordinary, but at its core, it's simple: taking the next step despite fear. Gumption means acting

when it's easier to stay still, showing resilience when quitting seems tempting.

Nelson Mandela said, *"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."*

True courage simplifies life. It quiets overthinking, clears hesitation, and replaces "what ifs" with action.

OMNIFARIOUSNESS (O): SIMPLICITY IN DIVERSITY

Omnifariousness is the openness to diverse experiences, perspectives, and solutions. Growth happens not in uniformity but in variety.

Heraclitus taught us, *"No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man."*

Simplicity here doesn't mean sameness; it means recognizing the natural flow of change and embracing it. By allowing diversity into your life, you simplify growth: every experience becomes a teacher.

WHY MEGO MATTERS

The beauty of MEGO lies in its simplicity:

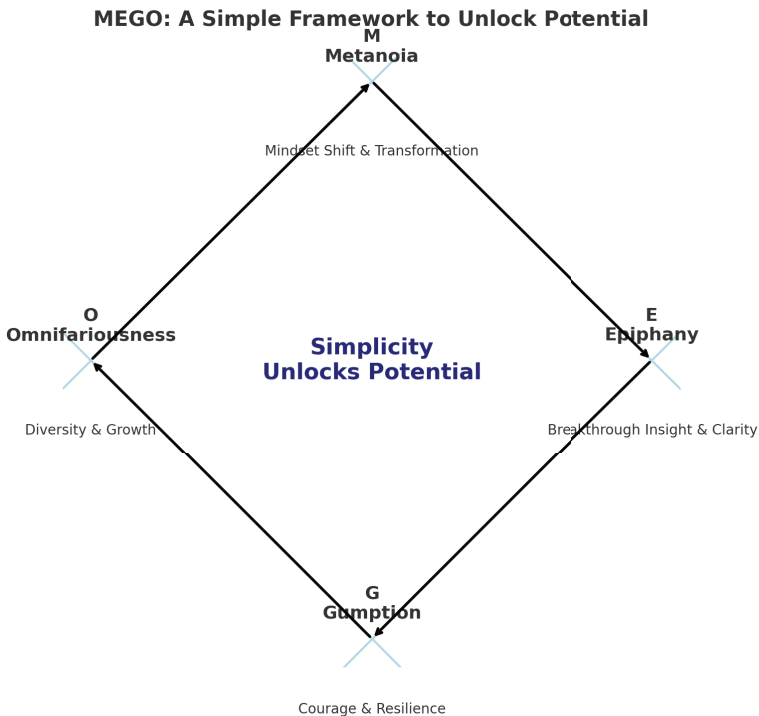
Metanoia → A simple mindset shift can redirect your destiny.

Epiphany → A simple realization can clear years of confusion.

Gumption → A simple act of courage can unlock doors to opportunity.

Omnifariousness → A simple openness to diversity can expand your horizon.

Instead of chasing a hundred strategies, MEGO gives you four timeless forces that anyone can understand, apply, and remember.



MEGO IN REAL LIFE

Consider Riya, who wanted to start a design studio but kept hesitating. By shifting her mindset (Metanoia), listening to her mentor’s insight (Epiphany), finding the courage to act (Gumption), and exploring diverse projects (Omnifariousness), she unlocked her potential.

Or think of Steve Jobs, whose career embodied MEGO: transforming mindset after failures, finding clarity in merging design with technology, having the courage to return to Apple, and drawing from diverse inspirations like calligraphy and spirituality.

Their stories prove that MEGO isn’t theoretical; it’s practical simplicity in action.

SIMPLICITY AS THE SECRET KEY

The reason MEGO works is because it embodies simplicity. You don't need complexity to grow—you need clarity.

Simplicity makes growth clear.

Simplicity makes growth doable.

Simplicity makes growth lasting.

By following MEGO, you cut through the noise and focus on what truly matters, unlocking your potential with elegance and ease.

Ask yourself:

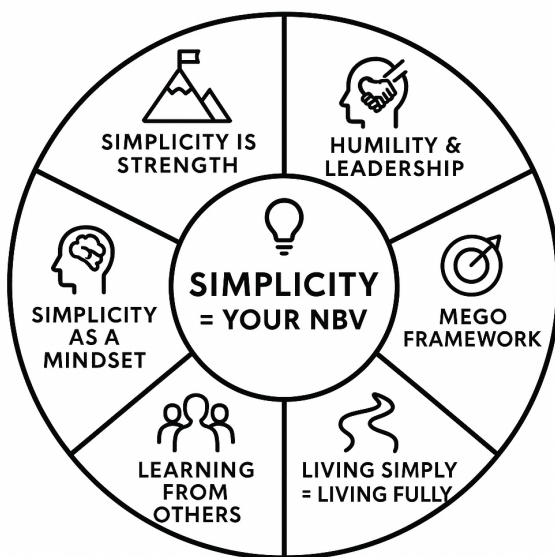
Where do I need a mindset shift (Metanoia)?

What realization is waiting to guide me (Epiphany)?

What simple courageous step can I take today (Gumption)?

What diverse experiences can I embrace (Omnifariousness)?

Your answers form the simplest, clearest roadmap to your *Next Best Version*.



MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I reflect on my journey toward becoming my *Next Best Version* (NBV), I realize that simplicity has been the quiet thread weaving my growth together. For years, I thought success was about adding more—more achievements, more responsibilities, and more recognition. But I’ve come to understand that true potential isn’t unlocked by accumulation. It’s unlocked by clarity. And clarity comes from simplicity.

THE MIND OF METANOIA

There was a time when my life felt like a tangled knot. My days were crammed with meetings, deadlines, and endless to-do lists. I was busy every minute, but I wasn’t fulfilled. Complexity had become my constant companion, and it weighed me down.

One evening, exhausted after a long day, I sat staring at my desk piled high with papers, emails, and reminders. I remember whispering to myself: “*Why does everything feel so heavy?*” That moment was small, almost unnoticeable, but it became a turning point. I began asking a different question: “*What truly matters right now?*”

That question—simple, yet powerful—became my anchor. It was my Metanoia moment: a profound shift in mindset. I realized I didn’t need to juggle everything; I needed to focus on what mattered most.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” —Aristotle

By simplifying my routines, trimming away the non-essential, and realigning my priorities, I started to breathe again. Simplicity gave me space for excellence.

THE MAGIC OF EPIPHANY

Sometime later, during a conversation with a mentor, I confessed how overwhelmed I felt. They simply said, “*Complexity is often a choice. You can choose simplicity.*”

That sentence struck me like lightning. It was my Epiphany—the realization that simplicity is not about less effort, but about intentional living. In that instant, I saw how often I was complicating my life by chasing what didn't matter. That one insight simplified years of confusion.

Steve Jobs once said, *"Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith."* For me, that brick was the weight of my own unnecessary complexity. My epiphany was learning that simplicity is not weakness—it's wisdom.

GUMPTION TO CHOOSE SIMPLICITY

But knowing the truth and living it are two different things. Choosing simplicity often requires courage because society glorifies the complicated. People respect big words, big strategies, and big plans. To stand in front of that noise and say, *"I choose simplicity,"* takes guts.

This was my Gumption test. It wasn't always easy to say no, to delegate, or to simplify processes others considered "the norm." But every time I did, I felt stronger, lighter, and more authentic.

Nelson Mandela's words reminded me: *"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."* I had to rise each time I was tempted back into clutter and complexity. Gumption became the courage to stay simple when complexity was easier to explain to the world.

EMBRACING OMNIFARIOUSNESS

Ironically, simplicity also taught me to embrace diversity. This was my Omnifariousness moment. By simplifying what didn't matter, I created space to explore what did—new ideas, fresh experiences, and different perspectives.

Heraclitus said, *"No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man."* In the same way, I

realized that life is enriched by variety and simplicity doesn't exclude diversity, it makes room for it.

When my schedule was cluttered, I had no room to explore. But when I simplified, I could embrace more—travel, art, meaningful conversations, even silence. Simplicity allowed me to hold diversity without being drowned by it.

THE MAGIC OF SIMPLICITY

Through this journey, I've discovered what I call the magic of simplicity. It is a force that:

- Clears the noise and reveals what matters.
- Transforms chaos into clarity.
- Turns fear into courage.
- And turns diversity into growth.

"The most complex things have the simplest solutions if we hold simplicity as a mindset. But even simple things become complex if we don't." – CPP

I have learned that simplicity is not the opposite of depth. It is the doorway to depth. It is not about shrinking life; it is about expanding it with clarity.

LIVING SIMPLY, LIVING FULLY

Simplicity has changed the way I live, lead, and connect. I've found that simple people are more approachable, simple leaders are more trusted, and simple choices are more sustainable. Humility naturally flows out of simplicity, and with humility comes authenticity.

I often tell myself:

"Less noise, more clarity. Less clutter, more purpose. Less ego, more life."

This has become my personal mantra.

As I continue my journey toward my NBV, I know I will face new challenges and complexities. But I also know that the compass of simplicity—through the lens of MEGO—will guide me.

- Metanoia taught me to change my mindset.
- Epiphany gave me clarity in confusion.
- Gumption gave me the courage to live simply.
- Omnifariousness allowed me to embrace diversity with ease.

Together, these forces remind me daily that simplicity isn't just a lifestyle—it is the key to unlocking my true potential.

Simplicity is the new complex. It is not less; it is more of what truly matters.

And for me, it has been the quiet power leading me toward my *Next Best Version*.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LEADERS AND PEOPLE AROUND FROM LEADERS

History and modern times are filled with leaders who embodied simplicity as their greatest strength.

- **Mahatma Gandhi:** Gandhi lived by the principle that simplicity is freedom. His simple lifestyle, plain clothing, and clear communication inspired millions to believe in the power of truth and nonviolence. He taught me that simplicity is not weakness—it is strength that can move nations.
- **Steve Jobs:** Jobs simplified technology. His vision was not about adding features, but about creating tools so intuitive that “it just works.” He reminded me that simplicity is sophistication, and clarity creates impact far greater than complexity ever could.
- **Nelson Mandela:** Even after decades in prison, Mandela returned to the world with humility and simplicity in his leadership. He taught me that simplicity in forgiveness is harder

than holding on to anger, and yet it is the simplicity that transforms nations.

FROM PEOPLE AROUND ME

Some of the most profound lessons on simplicity didn't come from famous leaders but from people around me.

A colleague once told me: *"You make things feel lighter just by simplifying them."* This made me realize that simplicity is a gift, not just for me, but for those around me.

From my parents: I learned that living within means, valuing honesty, and keeping life uncluttered brings peace that no wealth can buy.

From a teacher: I once struggled with a complex problem, and my teacher smiled and said: *"Break it down. The answer is simple."* That advice stuck with me for life—every problem becomes solvable when you strip it down to essentials.

From strangers and friends: I've seen auto drivers, shopkeepers, and ordinary people solve daily challenges with remarkable simplicity. They don't complicate decisions—they focus on what works. That practicality is wisdom in its purest form.

From leaders: I've learned that simplicity can inspire nations, transform industries, and heal divides.

From people around me: I've learned that simplicity can bring peace, solve problems, and keep life authentic.

Together, these lessons remind me that Simplicity is not just a tool for personal growth—it is a universal force that connects us all.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Simplicity is Strength

Clears away distractions, reduces clutter, and reveals what truly matters in life.

2. Simplicity as a Mindset

More than a lifestyle choice—it is a way of thinking that brings clarity, focus, and peace.

3. Humility & Leadership

Simple and humble leaders inspire trust, build deeper connections, and leave a lasting impact.

4. The MEGO Principle

A guiding principle to stay focused on what truly matters.

5. Learning from Others

Leaders like Gandhi, Jobs, Mandela, and Shaw—as well as ordinary people—show that simplicity is wisdom in action.

6. Simplicity = The New Complex

True wisdom lies in simplifying problems, not complicating them.

7. Living Simply = Living Fully

By focusing on essentials, we find clarity, deepen relationships, and walk steadily toward a meaningful life.

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CHAPTER 22:

HELPING OTHERS FIND THEIR NBV – THE POWER OF MENTORSHIP

Helping others find their *Next Best Version* (NBV) is one of the most rewarding contributions you can make. Personal growth is powerful, but when we extend that growth outward—guiding, uplifting, and empowering others—we multiply its impact. Mentorship becomes not just an act of service, but a legacy.

Mentorship is more than teaching skills or sharing advice. It is about seeing potential in someone else, even before they see it in themselves, and walking beside them as they discover their NBV.

“A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself.” – Oprah Winfrey

THE POWER OF MENTORSHIP

At its heart, mentorship is about guidance, encouragement, and belief. A mentor provides a compass when someone feels lost, a mirror when they need self-awareness, and a spark when they need courage.

Mentorship can take many forms:

- Formal mentorship through structured programs in organizations or education.
- Informal mentorship through friendships, family, colleagues, or even chance encounters.
- Community mentorship where leaders inspire large groups, such as spiritual leaders, coaches, or influencers.

Regardless of form, mentorship helps people step into their NBV by offering perspective, direction, and accountability.

WHY MENTORSHIP MATTERS

The journey to becoming one's NBV is not always linear. People often face self-doubt, fear, or lack of clarity. Here's where mentors play a crucial role:

- **Clarity in chaos:** A mentor helps mentees see possibilities they may not recognize.
- **Breaking barriers:** Mentors encourage mentees to overcome fear and take risks.
- **Sustaining momentum:** Mentorship provides accountability, ensuring progress continues.
- **Multiplying growth:** When one person finds their NBV, they inspire others, creating a ripple effect of growth.

BENEFITS OF MENTORSHIP

Mentorship creates transformation for both the mentee and the mentor:

For the mentee:

- Improved self-awareness (understanding strengths, weaknesses, and aspirations).
- Increased confidence through encouragement and validation.
- Enhanced skills and knowledge for personal and professional success.
- Expanded networks and opportunities through connections.

For the mentor:

- Deep satisfaction from making a difference.
- Reinforcement of their own learning through teaching.

- Legacy building, shaping the next generation of leaders.
- A reminder of humility and the power of service.

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” – Mahatma Gandhi

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF MENTORSHIP

Bill Gates & Warren Buffett: Their friendship and mentorship show how great minds can challenge and inspire each other, extending their impact in business and philanthropy.

Oprah Winfrey: Through her media platforms and book club, Oprah has mentored millions indirectly, encouraging self-discovery and empowerment.

Steve Jobs & Mark Zuckerberg: Jobs mentored Zuckerberg in Facebook’s early days, emphasizing focus and vision—lessons that shaped one of the world’s biggest companies.

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam: Fondly remembered as the “People’s President,” Kalam mentored countless young Indians, reminding them to dream big and pursue excellence with humility.

“True success is when your growth inspires someone else’s.” — CPP

THE MENTORSHIP MINDSET

To be an effective mentor, one doesn’t need all the answers. What matters most is the mindset:

- **Empathy:** Truly listening and understanding the mentee’s journey.
- **Encouragement:** Inspiring confidence and celebrating progress.
- **Example:** Living as a role model, embodying the values you wish to pass on.
- **Empowerment:** Helping mentees think independently, rather than creating dependency.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR MENTORSHIP

- **Start with listening:** Understand their goals, struggles, and vision of NBV.
- **Set shared expectations:** Agree on roles, boundaries, and outcomes.
- **Provide feedback with care:** Honest, constructive feedback builds trust and growth.
- **Share stories, not just solutions:** Real-life experiences make learning relatable.
- **Encourage action:** Guide mentees to take small, practical steps toward their NBV.
- **Celebrate milestones:** Acknowledge progress, no matter how small.

MENTORSHIP AS SERVICE

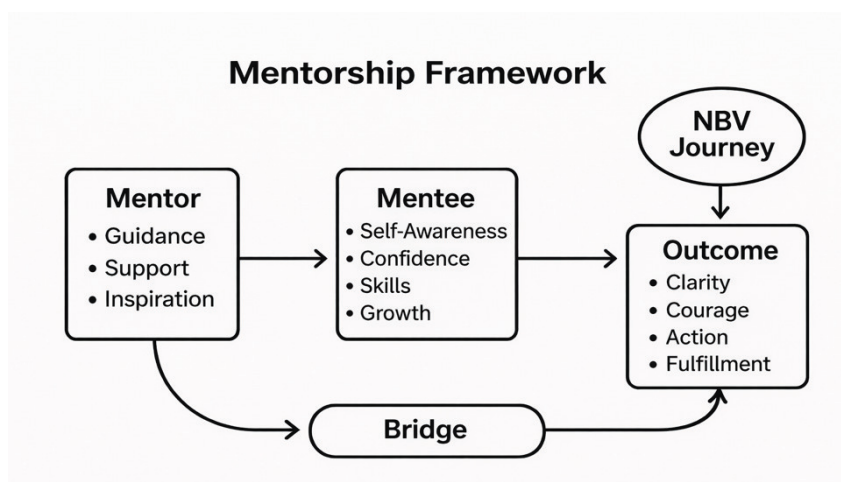
True mentorship is an act of service. It is about giving without expecting anything in return, and in that giving, both mentor and mentee grow. Helping someone discover their NBV doesn't just change their life, it contributes to a more empowered and compassionate world.

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

- Isaac Newton

Mentorship is a bridge between what someone is today and what they can become tomorrow. By guiding others toward their *Next Best Version*, you not only unlock their potential but also elevate your own.

To mentor is to light a lamp that shines beyond your own life, guiding others on the path to their NBV.



MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I look back on my journey to finding my *Next Best Version* (NBV), I realize how deeply mentorship has shaped me. It wasn't always through formal programs or structured sessions. Many times, it was a conversation, a word of encouragement, or a moment when someone believed in me more than I believed in myself. Those moments left marks on my life—gentle nudges that pushed me closer to the person I was meant to become.

One of my most influential mentors was a business leader who took me under her wing during the early stages of my career. I was ambitious but uncertain, eager yet insecure. She didn't just give me advice; she walked with me. Her feedback was honest, her support unwavering, and her belief in my potential gave me the courage to face challenges I thought were beyond me. She taught me the value of resilience not by lecturing, but by showing me through her own life.

Many of my mentors, interestingly, have been women. This was never intentional, but perhaps it was destiny. I've always connected deeply with women leaders—their clarity, compassion, and ability to balance strength with empathy. Their presence gave me a different

kind of courage: not loud, not aggressive, but steady and grounded. I found myself learning not just strategies for business or leadership, but ways of being—humility, grace, and conviction.

I think this affinity was shaped by my upbringing. I grew up surrounded by strong women—mothers, aunts, sisters, who carried wisdom in the way they lived. From them, I learned that leadership does not always roar; sometimes it whispers. It whispers in sacrifice, in consistency, and in choosing dignity when life tests you. This early influence made me value women’s perspectives and seek out their mentorship naturally.

Among all the mentors in my life, one woman stands out as my hero. For over three decades, her leadership, resilience, and determination have been a guiding light for me. She never needed a spotlight to prove her worth; her actions spoke louder than any words. Watching her rise through challenges, I found myself saying, *“If she can walk this path with such grace, I can too.”* To this day, I carry her lessons in my own journey.

Mentorship, however, has not only been something I received. Over time, it became something I gave. There’s a special kind of joy in paying it forward. Today, I mentor more than 300 girls through the GRIP program for Women in STEM, and over the years, I’ve had the privilege of guiding more than 1,000 young women. I’ve listened to their fears, shared my mistakes, and reminded them that they are stronger than they think. But it doesn’t stop there. My mentorship has extended to men, colleagues from different fields, and even members of the LGBTQA+++ community because at its core, mentorship isn’t about gender, background, or identity. It’s about human connection—one person believing in another.

One evening, after a long mentoring session with a young girl who was ready to quit her studies, she looked at me with tears in her eyes and said, *“You make me feel like I matter.”* That single sentence reminded me why I mentor. It’s not about titles, achievements, or

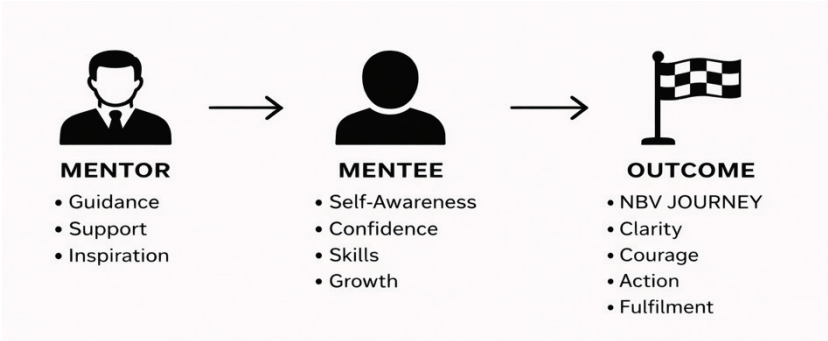
recognition; it’s about helping someone discover the light within themselves.

Mentorship has been a powerful force in my life. It gave me clarity when I was confused, courage when I was afraid, and strength when I felt weak. It has allowed me to grow, not just as a professional but as a human being. And in mentoring others, I’ve discovered an even deeper truth: every time I help someone find their *Next Best Version*, I move closer to mine.

“Mentorship is not about creating followers; it is about awakening leaders.” – CPP

Looking back, I feel immense gratitude for the mentors who believed in me, for the mentees who trusted me, and for the journey that continues to unfold. I am still learning, still growing, and still paying it forward. And that, to me, is the real power of mentorship.

FRAMEWORKS AND MODELS



There are several frameworks and models that can be used to guide the mentorship process. Some examples include:

GUIDING OTHERS TOWARDS THEIR NEXT BEST VERSION (NBV) THROUGH MENTORSHIP

Mentorship is one of the most powerful ways to help others find their *Next Best Version* (NBV). It is not just about providing advice; it is

about creating a structured, supportive, and inspiring relationship that enables growth, self-discovery, and action. In this chapter, we explore a practical approach for mentors and mentees using two complementary frameworks: GRIP for mentors and LEAP for mentees.

FOR MENTORS – GRIP: GUIDE, REVEAL, INVOLVE, PROGRESS

Being a mentor is about more than sharing your own experiences; it's about facilitating growth, uncovering potential, and empowering others. The GRIP framework provides a structured way for mentors to maximize impact:

G – Guide:

As a mentor, your primary role is to guide your mentee through the journey of self-discovery and personal growth. Guidance does not mean giving all the answers; it means helping them see possibilities, providing perspective, and pointing out opportunities. For instance, if your mentee struggles with career direction, guiding them could involve helping them explore strengths, values, and potential paths aligned with their NBV.

R – Reveal:

Mentorship is also about revealing hidden potential. Often, individuals are unaware of their unique abilities, strengths, or opportunities. By asking thought-provoking questions, offering honest feedback, and providing gentle challenges, mentors help mentees see themselves more clearly. Revealing untapped skills or encouraging them to explore unfamiliar areas can unlock new possibilities.

I – Involve:

Active involvement is critical. Mentorship should not be passive. Involve mentees in discussions, projects, and decisions where they can apply learning in real scenarios. Encouraging mentees to

participate, take initiative, and experiment nurtures confidence and reinforces learning. For example, involving a mentee in a team project or guiding them through problem-solving helps them bridge theory and practice.

P – Progress:

The ultimate goal of mentorship is progress. Mentors need to help mentees track their growth, set milestones, and celebrate achievements. Progress is not just about outcomes; it is about continuous improvement, reflection, and action. By creating a culture of accountability, encouraging self-reflection, and recognizing small wins, mentors ensure that the mentee’s journey toward their NBV is consistent and purposeful.

GRIP for Mentors
A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP



GUIDE

Steer mentees on the path to discovering their NBV.



REVEAL

Unveil hidden strengths and potential within them.



INVOLVE

Actively engage mentees in meaningful opportunities.



PROGRESS

Help mentees track and celebrate their achievements.

FOR MENTEES – LEAP: LEARN, EXPLORE, APPLY, PROCEED

While mentorship provides guidance, the mentee must actively engage with the process. The LEAP framework empowers mentees to take charge of their growth:

L – Learn:

The first step is learning—from the mentor, from experiences, and from self-reflection. Mentees should absorb insights, observe behavior's, and understand principles that can help shape their NBV. Learning is not passive; it requires curiosity, attention, and openness to feedback.

E – Explore:

Learning alone is not enough. Exploration involves trying new approaches, experimenting with strategies, and stepping out of comfort zones. Mentees should explore opportunities, perspectives, and skills that they may not have considered before. Exploration uncovers hidden passions and strengthens resilience.

A – Apply:

Knowledge and exploration are meaningful only when applied. Application involves taking concrete action, implementing strategies, and testing learnings in real-life scenarios. Whether it's practicing leadership, taking initiative at work, or solving a challenging problem, application bridges the gap between learning and achievement.

P – Proceed:

Finally, mentees must proceed with confidence, making progress toward their goals. This means taking responsibility, maintaining momentum, and continuously iterating based on feedback and experience. The willingness to proceed despite uncertainty is what separates aspiration from achievement.

LEAP for Mentees

EMPOWERING THE MENTORSHIP JOURNEY



LEARN

Absorb insights and principles that define your NBV.



EXPLORE

Step out of comfort zones to embrace new perspectives.



APPLY

Turn learnings into action by implementing strategies.



PROCEED

Confidently move forward on your path to growth.

THE MENTOR-MENTEE JOURNEY: A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP

When GRIP and LEAP are applied together, mentorship becomes a dynamic, powerful journey:

Mentors guide, reveal, involve, and track progress, creating an environment of trust, learning, and growth.

Mentees learn, explore, apply, and proceed, actively shaping their own NBV with confidence and clarity.

This approach ensures that mentorship is not a one-time event but a transformative process, helping individuals unlock their true potential while fostering a meaningful, lasting relationship between mentor and mentee.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Mentorship is transformative

A structured, supportive relationship designed to help others achieve their Next Best Version (NBV).

2. Mentor's role matters (GRIP)

Guide, reveal potential, involve mentees, and track their progress to actively foster growth.

3. Mentee's engagement (LEAP)

Learn, explore, apply guidance, and proceed to take ownership of their development and translate advice into action.

4. Synergy of GRIP and LEAP

Combining frameworks ensures accountability, measurable progress, and meaningful growth for both mentor and mentee.

5. Active listening and empathy

Critical qualities for effective mentorship, building trust, understanding, and psychological safety.

6. Encouragement and empowerment

Mentors inspire confidence, motivate mentees, and help them step beyond their comfort zones.

7. Structured frameworks enhance impact

Tools like GRIP, LEAP, GROW, and SMART provide structure, clarity, and actionable steps.

8. Mutual growth

Mentorship is a two-way journey where both mentor and mentee learn, reflect, and grow together.

9. Consistency and accountability

Regular engagement, goal tracking, and reflection ensure sustained progress and development.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

By helping others find their NBV, you can have a profound impact on their lives and help them achieve their goals. As the saying goes, *“The best way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.”*

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CHAPTER 23:

CREATING A COMMUNITY OF NBV SUPPORTERS

Achieving your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not a journey you need to take alone. While personal growth begins with self-awareness and determination, the support of a community can be the difference between fleeting progress and lasting transformation. Creating a community of NBV supporters—people who inspire, motivate, and hold each other accountable—can accelerate growth and make the journey more meaningful.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

Communities are more than just groups of people; they are ecosystems of energy, inspiration, and collaboration. Being part of a community of NBV supporters helps you stay accountable, receive feedback, and maintain momentum even when challenges arise.

As Helen Keller once said, *“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”* This insight applies perfectly to the NBV journey. When people come together with a shared commitment to growth, each member’s progress inspires others. Success becomes contagious, and setbacks are easier to navigate because the collective wisdom of the group provides perspective and solutions.

BENEFITS OF A COMMUNITY OF NBV SUPPORTERS

1. Increased Motivation

A community provides encouragement when energy dips. Seeing peers overcome challenges and achieve milestones motivates you to

push past your own limits. Regular interactions with a committed community reinforce focus, dedication, and optimism.

2. Improved Accountability

It's easy to procrastinate or lose sight of goals when you work in isolation. A community ensures accountability. Sharing your progress, goals, and timelines with supportive peers encourages consistent action. The gentle pressure of communal expectations keeps you on track.

3. Valuable Feedback

Communities provide perspectives that you might not see on your own. Feedback from peers or mentors helps refine your approach, identify blind spots, and improve decision-making. Constructive critique is easier to accept when it comes from a supportive environment.

4. Sense of Belonging

Human beings thrive on connection. Being part of a community cultivates a sense of belonging—a feeling that your growth matters, that your efforts are recognized, and that you are supported. This emotional foundation creates resilience, confidence, and the courage to take bold steps.

HOW TO CREATE A COMMUNITY OF NBV SUPPORTERS

- **Define the Purpose:** Start by clearly articulating the vision of your community. What values, goals, and outcomes do you want to foster? A shared purpose attracts like-minded individuals.
- **Invite the Right People:** Seek members who share your growth mindset and values. Diversity in skills, experiences, and perspectives enriches the community.
- **Create Engagement Opportunities:** Host discussions, workshops, peer-learning sessions, or informal meetups.

Structured interactions and informal conversations both play a role in bonding.

- **Foster Trust and Psychological Safety:** Encourage open communication, active listening, and non-judgmental sharing. Members must feel safe to express doubts, share failures, and celebrate successes.
- **Encourage Contribution and Collaboration:** Every member brings value. Promote mentorship within the community, co-creation of projects, and collaborative problem-solving.
- **Celebrate Milestones:** Recognize individual and collective achievements. Celebrations reinforce positive behaviour and strengthen community bonds.
- **Iterate and Evolve:** Communities grow when they adapt. Periodically assess the needs, dynamics, and structure of your community and make necessary adjustments to keep it relevant and vibrant.

REAL-LIFE INSPIRATION: COMMUNITIES – PAST AND PRESENT

Communities are not a modern invention—they are integral to who we are as human beings. Throughout history, humans have sought connection, shared purpose, and belonging. From small villages to bustling cities, communities have been formed around common goals, shared values, or collective survival.

Historical Roots of Community:

- In traditional villages, people gathered for festivals, rituals, and daily interactions, creating bonds that strengthened mutual support and trust.
- Schools and colleges have long served as micro-communities, where students learn together, collaborate on projects, and support each other's growth.

- Guilds, professional associations, and volunteer groups throughout history fostered knowledge sharing, mentorship, and collective problem-solving.

The Power of Inclusion and Belonging:

Being part of a community gives a sense of identity and purpose. Inclusion fosters psychological safety, allowing individuals to express themselves, contribute ideas, and grow without fear of judgment. This sense of belonging is crucial for motivation, engagement, and resilience, which are essential for achieving one's *Next Best Version* (NBV).

Modern-Day Communities:

- **Online Learning & Knowledge Sharing:** Coursera, LinkedIn Learning, and TED Communities connect learners globally to share insights, celebrate milestones, and receive mentorship.
- **Social Media & Messaging Platforms:** WhatsApp groups, Instagram communities, Facebook groups, X (formerly Twitter), Discord, BeReal, and Threads provide spaces for peer support, idea exchange, and networking across generations.
- **Professional Networks & Forums:** HR forums, women leaders' networks, entrepreneurial groups, and industry-specific boards offer mentorship, skill development, and collaborative opportunities.
- **Social Impact & Volunteering Groups:** Rotary International, environmental advocacy groups, and local volunteering communities unite people around shared purpose, amplifying individual efforts into collective impact.
- **Creative & Innovation Hubs:** TEDx communities, Maker Spaces, and innovation incubators encourage collaboration, idea exchange, and feedback while fostering personal growth and belonging.

Key Insight:

From ancient villages to modern digital platforms, communities have always provided structure, purpose, and belonging. By connecting with others—whether in person or online—we gain support, learn new perspectives, and accelerate our personal and professional growth.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

Reflecting on my journey to finding my *Next Best Version* (NBV), I realize that communities have been the lifeblood of my growth. From school and college circles to professional forums, from sports clubs to social impact groups, these communities have shaped who I am, providing guidance, encouragement, and a profound sense of belonging.

In school and college, I found my first taste of communal growth. Study groups, cultural clubs, and sports teams taught me collaboration, resilience, and the joy of shared achievements. These early experiences revealed the power of belonging and purpose, laying the foundation for the communities I would cherish later in life.

As I grew older, professional communities became central to my journey. HR networks, ERG networks, and LinkedIn groups with over 28,000 followers provided spaces to exchange knowledge, share experiences, and inspire one another. These networks offered mentorship, career insights, and the reassurance that we are never alone in our challenges.

I also drew inspiration from social impact communities—Rotary International, volunteering groups, environmental advocacy networks, and even temple and church communities. They taught me that shared purpose amplifies individual efforts and that meaningful contribution to society strengthens our own growth. Sports communities reinforced discipline, teamwork, and perseverance, reminding me that progress often requires patience and consistent effort.

Being part of these diverse communities taught me the importance of vulnerability and openness. Sharing fears, doubts, and ambitions created trust and deepened connections. In these spaces, feedback was constructive, encouragement was genuine, and success—big or small—was celebrated collectively. I realized that personal growth multiplies when it is nurtured in a supportive, engaged network.

Even in the digital world, communities have played a pivotal role. My LinkedIn network, Instagram discussions, WhatsApp groups, and TEDx communities became invaluable spaces to exchange ideas, seek guidance, and share achievements. These platforms allowed me to connect with like-minded individuals across geographies, creating a virtual community that strengthened my resolve and broadened my perspective.

Through these experiences, I understood that humans are inherently communal beings. Historically, communities formed around shared purposes—villages, trade guilds, temples, and schools. Today, while the platforms have evolved, the essence remains the same: inclusion, shared vision, and the power of connection drive growth. Being part of a community provides accountability, mentorship, emotional support, and a sense of purpose that cannot be replicated in isolation.

I now strive to create my own community of NBV supporters bringing together individuals who are committed to growth, learning, and helping each other succeed. I've seen first-hand how communities foster motivation, celebrate small wins, and push us to rise above our limitations. They are not just groups of people; they are ecosystems of support, inspiration, and collective achievement.

Being part of these communities has shaped my NBV journey more than any solitary effort ever could. They've taught me humility, resilience, empathy, and the courage to pursue my goals relentlessly. My journey continues, strengthened by the lessons, encouragement, and camaraderie that each community has offered.

Communities are an essential pillar of personal growth. They provide support, accountability, inspiration, and a sense of belonging that

accelerates learning and development. From schools and sports teams to professional networks, social impact groups, religious communities, and virtual platforms, each community contributes to shaping your NBV.

By participating actively, being vulnerable, and giving back, we strengthen not just ourselves but those around us. Creating and nurturing communities of NBV supporters ensures that growth is collective, sustainable, and deeply impactful. The journey to your NBV is not meant to be solitary—communities empower, inspire, and propel us to reach our full potential.

FRAMEWORKS AND MODELS FOR CREATING A COMMUNITY OF NBV SUPPORTERS

Building a strong and supportive community requires intention, structure, and an understanding of human behaviour. Communities are not a modern invention; they are an integral part of human society. From villages and neighbourhoods to schools, colleges, and religious institutions, communities have always provided a sense of belonging, support, and collective purpose. Today, digital platforms allow us to create global communities, connecting people across geographies and generations.

Here are some practical frameworks and models that can guide the process of creating and sustaining a community of NBV supporters:

1. THE COMMUNITY BUILDING FRAMEWORK

This framework provides a structured approach to creating a community:

- **Define Purpose:** Clearly articulate why the community exists and what it aims to achieve.
- **Identify Audience:** Determine who will benefit from the community and who will actively contribute.
- **Engagement Plan:** Design activities, discussions, and interactions that encourage participation and value creation.

- **Feedback Loops:** Continuously gather input from members to adapt, improve, and evolve the community.
- **Sustainability:** Establish leadership, rituals, and processes to ensure the community remains active and meaningful over time.

The Community Building Framework

A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO CREATING A COMMUNITY



DEFINE PURPOSE

Clearly articulate why the community exists and what it aims to achieve.



IDENTIFY AUDIENCE

Determine who will benefit from the community and who will actively contribute.



ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Design activities, discussions, and interactions that encourage participation and value creation.



FEEDBACK LOOPS

Continuously gather input from members to adapt, improve, and evolve the community.



SUSTAINABILITY

Establish leadership, rituals, and processes to ensure the community remains active and meaningful over time.

2. THE SOCIAL IDENTITY MODEL

This model explains how individuals identify with and participate in communities:

- **Shared Values and Goals:** Members align around common objectives and principles.
- **Belonging and Inclusion:** A sense of acceptance and connection motivates sustained participation.

- **Roles and Contributions:** Each member understands their role, feels empowered to contribute, and recognizes the value of their input.
- **Collective Efficacy:** The community's belief in its ability to achieve goals strengthens engagement and cohesion.

SOCIAL IDENTITY MODEL

HOW INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFY WITH
& PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITIES



SHARED VALUES AND GOALS

Members align around common objectives and principles.



BELONGING AND INCLUSION

A sense of acceptance and connection motivates sustained participation.



ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Each member understands their role, feels empowered to contribute, and recognizes the value of their input.



COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

The community's belief in its ability to achieve goals strengthens

3. GRIP + LEAP APPROACH (MENTORSHIP IN COMMUNITY CONTEXT)

Communities often thrive when mentorship structures are embedded:

GRIP (Guide, Reveal, Involve, Progress): Mentors in the community actively guide members, reveal potential, involve them in meaningful activities, and track their progress.

LEAP (Learn, Explore, Apply, Proceed): Mentees engage proactively, take ownership of learning, explore new ideas, apply guidance, and move forward in their personal and professional growth.

This combination fosters accountability, continuous learning, and measurable growth within the community.

4. DIGITAL & SOCIAL COMMUNITY PLATFORMS

In the modern era, communities extend beyond physical spaces:

- **Social Media Groups:** LinkedIn (professional and knowledge sharing), WhatsApp and Telegram groups (peer support), Facebook groups, Instagram, and X (networking and inspiration).
- **Learning Communities:** Coursera, Udemy, TED Community, and other online knowledge-sharing platforms.
- **Special Interest Communities:** ERG networks, HR forums, volunteering groups, sports clubs, environmental advocacy communities, and spiritual groups (temples, churches).

By combining structured frameworks with digital and offline platforms, you can create a thriving NBV community that inspires, supports, and sustains growth. Communities are more than networks; they are ecosystems where individuals share knowledge, celebrate progress, and uplift one another.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Creating A Community Of NBV Supporters

1. Community is powerful—it provides support, encouragement, and motivation.
2. Motivation and engagement—a community of NBV supporters inspires individuals to stay focused on their goals.

3. A sense of belonging—being part of a community helps individuals feel connected and supported.
4. Vulnerability and openness are essential for building deeper and more meaningful relationships.
5. Frameworks and models—tools like the Community Building Framework and the Social Identity Model—can guide the creation and growth of NBV communities.

By creating a community of NBV supporters, you can provide a supportive network that can help individuals achieve their *Next Best Version*. As the saying goes, "*Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.*"

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CHAPTER 24:

PAYING IT FORWARD - HELPING OTHERS ACHIEVE THEIR NBV

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” — Winston Churchill

As we journey toward becoming our *Next Best Version* (NBV), we eventually realize that our true growth reaches its peak when we begin to lift others. The joy of becoming our NBV multiplies when we use our experiences, lessons, and compassion to help others become theirs.

This is the spirit of paying it forward—the idea that the good we do for others today will someday return to us, often in unexpected ways.

“What you give comes back, may not be from the same person. What you receive, give it back, even if it’s not to the same person.” — CPP

This truth captures the essence of universal reciprocity. Life is not a linear exchange of give-and-take—it’s a circle of contribution, where kindness, help, and goodness find their way back to us in the ways the universe decides.

THE POWER OF PAYING IT FORWARD

Paying it forward is not merely about generosity; it is an act of faith in humanity. When you help someone without expecting anything in return, you send a message of belief that the world still runs on compassion and integrity.

“It is the universe that decides who will receive from you, or who you will receive from; rarely it is give and take from the same person”

— CPP

This perspective reminds us that our role is not to control outcomes but to play our part. The universe orchestrates balance. You may inspire a stranger, uplift a colleague, or mentor a young dreamer, and someday, in a different place, someone else will appear to help you when you need it. That's the invisible economy of goodness.

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

— Pablo Picasso

When we pay it forward, we transform from seekers to contributors. We evolve from asking *"What can I get?"* to *"What can I give?"* That shift is the hallmark of someone who has truly begun to live their NBV.

WHY PAYING IT FORWARD MATTERS

1. It gives purpose beyond self

When you share your time, knowledge, or kindness, you tap into a deeper sense of meaning. You start to see your experiences not as isolated moments, but as lessons meant to empower others.

"Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile." —Albert Einstein

Helping others achieve their NBV is the most fulfilling form of self-expression. It's how we move from individual success to collective evolution.

2. It strengthens the human connection

In an increasingly self-centered world, paying it forward rebuilds what is most human in us—connection.

Each act of giving, however small, bridges a gap between hearts. It reminds us that we're not alone in this journey; we're part of a shared human experience.

When you extend a hand, offer a word of encouragement, or share your learning, you silently say:

“I’ve walked this road, and I’ll walk beside you until you find your way.”

3. It builds gratitude and perspective

Helping others reminds us how much we’ve already received, from mentors, friends, family, and even strangers.

It brings gratitude into focus and transforms past struggles into sources of strength for someone else.

By turning pain into purpose, and learning into legacy, you create meaning out of every chapter of your life story.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO PAY IT FORWARD

- **Be a Mentor or Guide:** Share your experiences with authenticity. Your failures and breakthroughs can be someone else’s roadmap to resilience.
- **Support without Expectation:** Kindness needs no witness or reward. A smile, a listening ear, or encouragement can spark someone’s confidence when they need it most.
- **Create Pathways for Others:** Open doors where you can,—through introductions, recommendations, or opportunities. You might just be the bridge someone needs to cross.
- **Share Your Knowledge:** Write, teach, or simply converse—every time you share what you know, you multiply growth.
- **Model the Spirit of Giving:** Your consistent example will inspire others to do the same, turning your life into a quiet movement of transformation.

“One act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees.”

— Amelia Earhart

THE RIPPLE EFFECT: BECOMING A CHAIN OF NBVS

Imagine if every person who became their NBV helped even one more person find theirs. The effect would be exponential, a living chain of empowered individuals paying it forward, creating a culture of upliftment.

Your act of generosity today can ripple through lives you'll never meet, but that's how lasting impact is created. You become not just your best version, but a catalyst for the best versions of others.

"What you give returns—maybe not from the same hands, but through the same heart." — CPP

This isn't just philosophy; it's energy in motion. The universe always keeps balance. When you give without counting, the universe counts for you.

REFLECTIONS: LEGACY OF THE GIVER

Think about the people who helped you on your path—the ones who believed, encouraged, and guided when you doubted yourself.

Paying it forward is how you honour their faith in you. It's how you ensure that the chain of kindness never breaks.

"Finding your NBV is a start. Being your NBV is ongoing. Becoming your NBV is not the end—it's the beginning of a next start. It is a continuous process." — CPP

Becoming your NBV is not a destination. It's an evolving cycle—of learning, growing, and giving. Each time you help someone else rise, you rise again.

"When you learn, teach. When you get, give." — Maya Angelou

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

The Story of Nicholas Winton

Nicholas Winton, a British stockbroker, rescued 669 Jewish children from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia during World War II. Without seeking recognition or reward, he organized transport, foster care, and safe passage to Britain. His quiet compassion and moral courage are a timeless example of what it means to pay it forward without expectation.

“What you give comes back may not be from the same person.” – CPP

The Story of Dr. Abdul Kalam – The Mentor President

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, India’s “People’s President,” dedicated his life to empowering young minds. Despite his stature as a renowned scientist and national leader, he spent countless hours mentoring students, visiting schools, and encouraging the youth to dream big. His generosity was not material—it was intellectual and emotional, inspiring millions to believe in their potential.

He believed that knowledge shared is strength multiplied, and through his mentorship, he created ripples of innovation and self-belief that continue to shape India’s future. Dr. Kalam’s life is a living embodiment of becoming your NBV by helping others find theirs.

The Story of Oprah Winfrey – Transforming Pain into Purpose

Born into poverty and hardship, Oprah Winfrey transformed her own struggles into a platform for healing and empowerment. Through her talk shows, philanthropic work, and leadership programs, she has helped countless people find their voice, purpose, and confidence.

Her belief in the human spirit has inspired others to pay it forward in their own ways from scholarships and education initiatives to simple

acts of compassion in their communities. Oprah's journey shows that when we rise, we can lift others higher still.

"Finding your NBV is a start. Being your NBV is ongoing. Becoming your NBV is not the end—it's the beginning of a next start." — CPP

The Story of Kailash Satyarthi – A Crusader for Children's Freedom

Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi has spent his life fighting child labor and advocating for every child's right to education and freedom. He didn't just rescue children, he restored their dignity and future. His work inspired a global movement that continues to liberate thousands each year.

Satyarthi's belief that "every child matters" exemplifies how one person's purpose can ignite a global chain of compassion and justice. His life demonstrates the NBV principle that true greatness is measured by how much we give back.

The Story of the "Café Sospeso" Movement in Italy

Originating in Naples, the Caffè Sospeso ("suspended coffee") is a tradition where someone pays for two coffees—one for themselves and one for an unknown person who cannot afford it. This simple act of anonymous generosity spread across the world, becoming a global symbol of everyday compassion.

It shows that paying it forward doesn't require wealth or status—just intent. Even a cup of coffee can become a seed of kindness that touches countless lives.

"It is the universe that decides who will receive from you or who you will receive from rarely it is give and take from the same person." – CPP

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I look back on my journey toward finding my *Next Best Version* (NBV), I realize that paying it forward has not been a chapter in my life—it has been the very thread that weaves it all together. Every moment I have given, mentored, or supported another person has shaped me as much as it has helped them. Each act of giving has been both a reflection of who I am and a reminder of who I aspire to become.

Over the years, I've had the privilege of mentoring more than a thousand girl students—each with dreams, challenges, and a unique story to tell. Some came from humble backgrounds, some battled self-doubt, and others simply needed someone to believe in them. Watching them transform, step by step, into confident individuals has been one of the most rewarding parts of my journey. I've learned that empowerment doesn't always come from giving answers—sometimes, it's about asking the right questions and holding space for someone's growth.

My journey also opened doors to connect with LGBTQIA++ students, many of whom faced the pain of being misunderstood and unseen. Guiding them, listening to their truth, and helping them rebuild confidence in a world that can often be unkind taught me the real meaning of empathy. I didn't just counsel them; they taught me about courage—the courage to live authentically, to love oneself unapologetically, and to embrace humanity in its most beautiful diversity.

Beyond mentoring, I've had the joy of coaching students across all genders, many of whom have gone on to become business leaders, entrepreneurs, and CEOs. Every conversation with them reminded me that success is not a privilege—it's a possibility when nurtured with guidance, belief, and purpose. I've never charged for my time or taken gifts for these sessions because I've always believed that knowledge shared freely carries its own energy—one that multiplies when given without expectation.

As part of my passion for learning and sharing, I've delivered hundreds of guest lectures across colleges and universities in multiple countries, often to young minds standing at the crossroads of ambition and uncertainty. Each session reaffirmed my belief that the true joy of teaching lies in seeing a spark ignite, when a student suddenly believes, "*Yes, I can.*"

I've also had the privilege of sponsoring the education of underprivileged girl students, ensuring that financial limitations never dim their potential. Supporting them through their academic journeys has been a reminder that opportunity is the greatest gift one can give because it doesn't just change one life; it changes generations.

Some of the most emotional and difficult experiences have been counseling girls and women who have faced trauma or sexual harassment helping them find their voice again after deep pain caused by cruel circumstances or people. Sitting with them in silence, hearing their stories, and helping them rediscover strength has taught me that healing begins when someone truly listens. Those moments have been painful, humbling, and profoundly moving. They reminded me that compassion is not about pity—it's about standing beside someone until they find the courage to stand again.

I've also been privileged to be part of anti-suicide counseling initiatives, where I've witnessed both despair and hope in their rawest forms. In those moments, words became life itself. Knowing that even one conversation, one connection, one gesture could save a life has been the most sacred experience of all. It reaffirmed my belief that kindness can literally keep someone alive that presence can be more powerful than any solution.

My journey of paying it forward extends beyond people into the planet itself. I've been part of several environmental and health initiatives, working with communities to create awareness about sustainability and well-being. These experiences have deepened my respect for the interconnectedness of all life that our responsibility

doesn't end with humans; it extends to the earth we walk on and the air we breathe.

I've also found immense fulfilment in mentoring Gen Alpha students, guiding them to balance ambition with empathy, technology with values, and intelligence with mindfulness. Watching their brilliance unfold gives me hope that the future is in capable, compassionate hands.

Through organizations like Rotary and other NGOs, I've had the opportunity to give back to society in diverse ways from community service and education initiatives to health drives and youth mentorship programs. These experiences have constantly reminded me that service is not a task; it's a way of life.

Every person I've met, every life I've touched, and every story I've been part of has added meaning to my own. Paying it forward has never been about recognition or reward; it has been about responsibility, gratitude, and the quiet joy of knowing that I've left a little light where there was once darkness.

When I think about my NBV today, I realize it's not defined by success or status, but by impact by how many hearts I've touched, how many lives I've uplifted, and how many moments of hope I've helped create. I've learned that true fulfilment doesn't come from what we achieve; it comes from what we share.

And as I continue this journey, I know that becoming my NBV is not an endpoint; it's a continuous evolution. Every time I help someone else find strength, purpose, or clarity, I rediscover my own. Each act of kindness brings me one step closer to the person I was always meant to be.

Paying it forward has not only shaped my path; it has shaped my purpose. It is the reason I continue to learn, grow, and give. Because in helping others rise, I have found my greatest joy, my deepest peace, and my truest version of self.

When I look back on my own journey, I see a path illuminated not by achievements, but by moments of giving, times when I reached out to help, to guide, or to simply listen. Each of those moments has become a quiet memory of purpose. And as I continue to walk this path, I'm reminded that the real measure of a life well lived is not in how much we accomplish, but in how many lives we touch with kindness and courage.

So, as you reflect on your own NBV journey, take a moment to ask yourself—who can I lift today? It doesn't have to be a grand act; even a single gesture of understanding can change the direction of someone's day, or even their life. When you extend your hand to another, you extend your own growth.

Because the truth is, in helping others find their light, you shine brighter too. That's the quiet magic of paying it forward; it turns giving into growing, compassion into connection, and purpose into peace.

And perhaps that is what becoming your *Next Best Version* is all about—not just transforming yourself, but helping the world around you transform, one small act of kindness at a time.

FRAMEWORKS AND MODELS

While the spirit of paying it forward often begins from the heart, structured frameworks can help us turn that intention into consistent, meaningful action. These models offer a way to reflect, plan, and sustain the process of helping others, ensuring that our efforts create a lasting ripple of change.

1. THE 5-STEP MODEL OF PAYING IT FORWARD

This model provides a clear, actionable approach to embedding the pay-it-forward mindset into daily life.

Step 1: Recognize the Opportunity

Notice moments where your time, experience, or empathy can make a difference—whether it’s mentoring a student, guiding a colleague, or offering emotional support to someone in need. Opportunities to give are all around us; we just need to stay aware.

Step 2: Build Genuine Connections

True impact begins with authentic relationships. Listen, understand, and connect with sincerity. Paying it forward is not a transaction—it’s an act of human connection built on trust and compassion.

Step 3: Offer Support or Resources

Contribute what you can—knowledge, time, encouragement, or even access to opportunities. The value of your contribution is not in its size, but in its sincerity.

Step 4: Encourage Continuation

Inspire the person you’ve helped to pay it forward to someone else. This creates a cycle of kindness and empowerment, turning one act into a chain reaction of positive energy.

Step 5: Reflect and Renew

Pause to reflect on how giving has transformed you. Gratitude reinforces growth, when we acknowledge the joy of giving, we’re motivated to continue doing it more consciously.

5-STEP MODEL OF PAYING IT FORWARD

1. **Recognize Opportunity**
Stay aware and look for chances to help.
2. **Build Connections**
Listen, care, and connect with others.
3. **Offer Support**
Share your time, skills, or resources.
4. **Encourage Continuation**
Inspire others to pay it forward.
5. **Reflect & Renew**
Pause, reflect, and learn for next time.

2. THE RIPPLE EFFECT MODEL

This model visualizes how a single act of kindness or mentorship can spread far beyond its original point of impact—like a stone dropped in still water.

When you help one person, you not only influence their life, but also everyone they, in turn, touch. The effect multiplies reaching families, communities, and sometimes even generations.

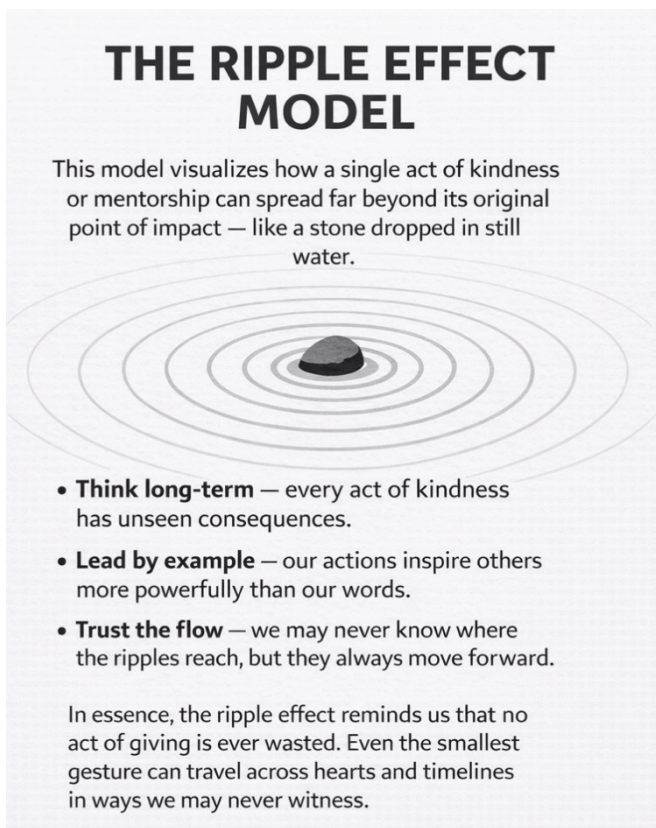
The Ripple Effect Model encourages us to:

Think long-term: Every act of kindness has unseen consequences.

Lead by example: Our actions inspire others more powerfully than our words.

Trust the flow: We may never know where the ripples reach, but they always move forward.

In essence, the ripple model reminds us that no act of giving is ever wasted. Even the smallest gesture can travel across hearts and timelines in ways we may never witness.



3. THE CIRCLE OF CONTRIBUTION MODEL

This model is inspired by the principle that life is not about “give and take,” but about give and give forward—reflecting your belief that what we give may not come back from the same person, and what we receive may not come from whom we gave to.

In the Circle of Contribution, giving, receiving, and gratitude flow continuously in different directions forming a dynamic cycle of positive energy.

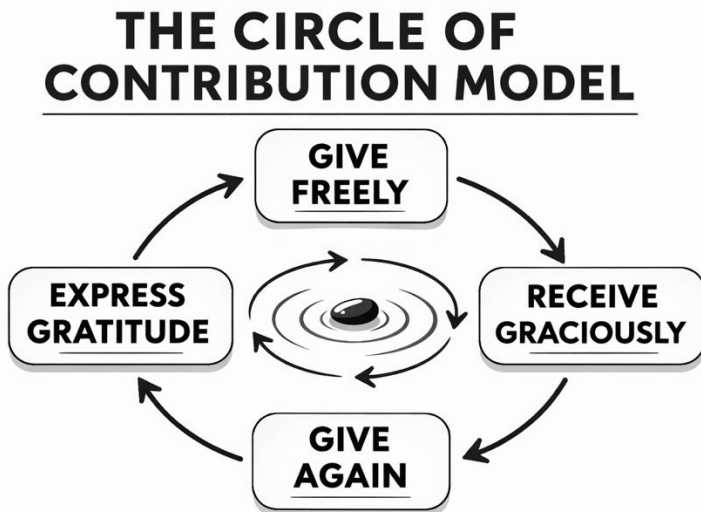
Give Freely: Share your time, skills, and compassion without expecting recognition or return.

Receive Graciously: Accept help, love, or kindness from others and the universe with humility.

Give Again: Channel what you've received into acts of goodness for others, continuing the circle.

Express Gratitude: Acknowledge each exchange giving thanks reinforces the energy of abundance.

This circle ensures that generosity never stops moving. It creates a self-sustaining ecosystem of compassion—one where energy, support, and inspiration flow seamlessly through people and communities.

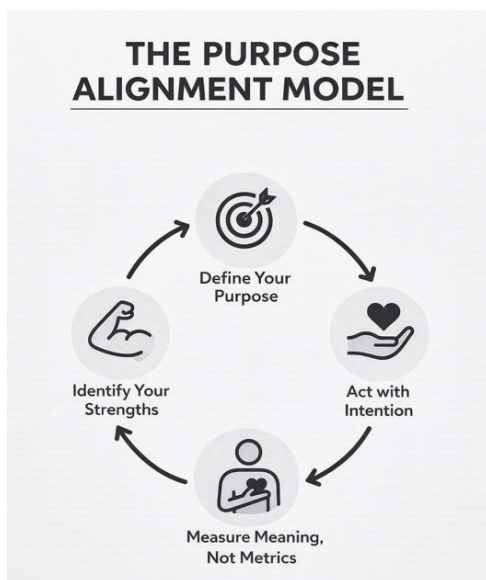


4. THE PURPOSE ALIGNMENT MODEL

This framework connects paying it forward with your larger sense of purpose aligning giving with your values, strengths, and mission.

- **Define Your Purpose:** Clarify what causes, people, or areas resonate most with you (for example, education, environment, youth empowerment, or mental well-being.)
- **Identify Your Strengths:** Recognize what you can uniquely contribute—mentorship, advocacy, skill-building, or emotional support.
- **Act with Intention:** Align your giving with both your purpose and your abilities. This ensures that your contribution is both authentic and sustainable.
- **Measure Meaning, Not Metrics:** Instead of counting outcomes, reflect on the depth of change you help create. True giving cannot always be quantified.

This model helps you ensure that your journey of giving is not just spontaneous, but also meaningful and purpose-driven.



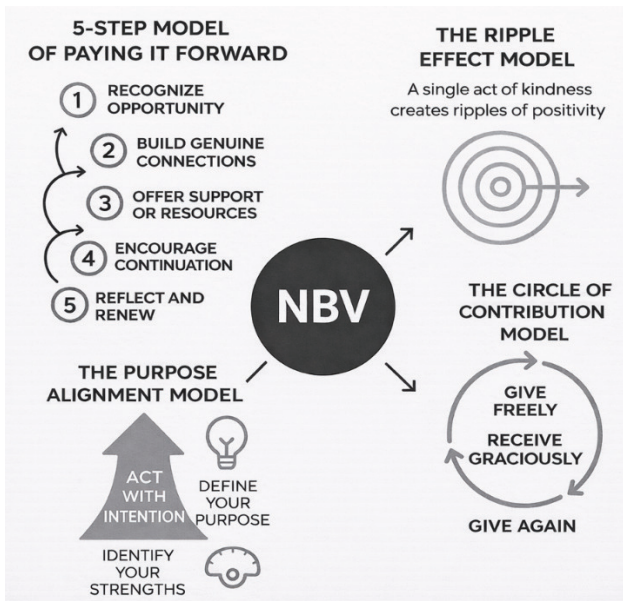
INTEGRATING FRAMEWORKS WITH NBV

These frameworks are not isolated theories—they are living models that evolve with your journey. As you continue to grow into your *Next Best Version*, each act of giving becomes part of a larger personal philosophy:

- Awareness helps you recognize opportunities.
- Connection helps you act with empathy.
- Contribution helps you create ripples of change.
- Reflection helps you sustain gratitude.

When you combine structure with sincerity, your giving becomes transformational—for both you and those you touch.

Because in the end, paying it forward is not about doing more; it's about being more—more aware, more compassionate, and more human.



By paying it forward, we create a ripple effect of kindness and generosity that moves through people, communities, and generations. Each act of giving, no matter how small, becomes a seed for someone else's growth and a reflection of your own *Next Best Version*.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. The power of paying it forward

Helping others without expecting anything in return can create a ripple effect of kindness and generosity.

2. Benefits of paying it forward

An increased sense of purpose, improved relationships, and a positive impact on others.

3. Real-life examples

Stories like Nicholas Winton and others illustrate the profound impact of paying it forward.

4. Frameworks and models

Various models, such as the 5-step model and the ripple effect model, can help guide the process of paying it forward.

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CHAPTER 25:

LEAVING A LEGACY OF NBV - MAKING A LASTING IMPACT

Leaving a legacy of your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not about wealth, fame, or monuments. It's about the positive difference you make in the lives of others, the values you uphold, and the inspiration you leave behind. Every action, every choice, every act of kindness adds to the story of your life—a story that continues to live on through others.

When we consciously strive to live as our *Next Best Version*, we begin to influence people around us—our families, teams, communities, and society. Legacy is not something we leave after we are gone; it is something we build every single day through how we live, lead, and love.

“Legacy is not built in years; it’s built in the lives you touch.” —
CPP

THE POWER OF LEGACY

Legacy is more than remembrance; it's continuity of impact. It is the ripple effect of your values, vision, and actions that continue to shape lives long after you've moved on.

As Peter Strople said, *“Legacy is not what’s left tomorrow when you’re gone. It’s what you give, create, impact, and contribute today while you’re here.”*

When you live your NBV daily—through integrity, compassion, courage, and contribution—you create invisible threads of inspiration that others can follow. The power of legacy lies in how

you make people feel, how you encourage them to grow, and how you model what's possible when one lives with purpose.

Your story becomes a roadmap for others—a reminder that growth is continuous and that greatness lies not in perfection, but in progress.

BENEFITS OF LEAVING A LEGACY OF NBV

1. A DEEPER SENSE OF PURPOSE

When you focus on leaving a legacy of NBV, your life gains clarity and direction. You no longer live just for the moment; you live for meaning.

Every decision becomes more intentional because you start asking:

“What will this teach others?”

“How will this action inspire someone to become their best self?”

This shift brings fulfilment and helps align your daily efforts with your higher purpose.

2. BUILDING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Legacy is never built alone; it grows through people.

When you treat others with respect, share your wisdom, and help them rise, you build relationships grounded in trust, empathy, and gratitude.

True leaders don't create followers; they create more leaders.

By living your NBV authentically, you show others what real growth and purpose look like and that inspires them to do the same.

3. EXPANDING YOUR POSITIVE IMPACT

Every time you help someone find their voice, overcome fear, or discover their potential, you multiply your impact.

Your NBV legacy becomes a catalyst for transformation in others. One encouraging word, one act of kindness, or one genuine gesture can create ripples that reach far beyond your sight.

When you empower others, your influence expands across generations through classrooms, workplaces, homes, and communities.

4. CREATING A LIVING LEGACY

A true legacy doesn't begin when you leave; it lives while you are alive.

It shows up in the culture you build, the values you embody, and the difference you make every day.

Living your NBV ensures that your legacy isn't just remembered—it's experienced.

You become the story others tell when they speak of integrity, compassion, and courage.

And when future generations look back, they won't just see what you achieved—they will see who you became.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO BUILD A LEGACY OF NBV

- **Live your Values Daily:** Let honesty, kindness, and humility guide every interaction.
- **Mentor and Empower Others:** Share your experiences generously and guide others toward their NBV.
- **Give Back to Society:** Offer your time, skills, or resources to causes that align with your purpose.
- **Document Your Journey:** Write, speak, or record your insights—your story can light the path for others.
- **Celebrate Others' Growth:** Rejoice in others' success. True NBV leaders uplift and empower.

- **Lead by Example:** Let your actions reflect your principles—live your NBV so fully that others can feel it.

THE TRUE MEANING OF A LEGACY OF NBV

In the end, your NBV legacy is not measured by titles or possessions, but by transformation in yourself and in others.

It's about who you become and how you inspire others to become.

As you continue your journey, remember: *“The footprints you leave today will guide someone tomorrow.”*

By living with purpose, authenticity, and love, you ensure that your impact continues to inspire long after you're gone. That is the ultimate legacy of your *Next Best Version*.

“Finding your own NBV is creating a story, and helping others to find their NBV is legacy and collective NBV is success!” — CPP

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF NBV LEGACY

A legacy of *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not built overnight—it's shaped through purpose, perseverance, and passion. The following individuals have lived their NBV in ways that continue to inspire millions. Their stories remind us that legacy is not about being famous, but about being meaningful.

The Legacy of Ratan Tata – Leadership with Compassion

Ratan Tata's legacy is one of integrity, empathy, and purposeful leadership.

As the Chairman of the Tata Group, he demonstrated that business can be both profitable and principled. His NBV journey was never just about expanding a corporate empire, but about creating value for society.

He led with quiet strength and humility, ensuring that every Tata enterprise contributed to nation-building from rural development to

education and healthcare. His belief that wealth must serve humanity continues to guide generations of leaders.

Ratan Tata's legacy proves that character and compassion are as vital as competence in building a truly sustainable legacy.

The Legacy of Sudha Murty – Simplicity with Service

Sudha Murty, author, philanthropist, and Chairperson of Infosys Foundation, has lived her NBV through kindness and humility.

Her journey reflects how one person's consistent acts of goodness can create enormous ripples of change.

She has worked tirelessly to support education, healthcare, and rural empowerment, often reaching where others do not go. What makes her legacy remarkable is not just what she gives, but how she gives with sincerity and without seeking recognition.

Her life teaches us that true greatness lies in simplicity and that quiet service often leaves the loudest legacy.

The Legacy of Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw – Innovation with Purpose

As the founder of Biocon, Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw redefined what was possible for women in science and entrepreneurship.

Her legacy lies not only in building a world-class biotechnology enterprise but in democratizing healthcare and making medicines affordable for millions.

Her journey shows that impact is born from courage—the courage to dream differently, to lead with ethics, and to use innovation for the greater good. Through her leadership, she has inspired a generation of entrepreneurs to link profit with purpose—a powerful NBV principle in action.

The Legacy of Kailash Satyarthi – Freedom through Compassion

Kailash Satyarthi, Nobel Peace Laureate and founder of Bachpan Bachao Andolan, dedicated his life to ending child labour and ensuring education for every child.

His legacy is living proof that one person's conviction can transform millions of lives.

Driven by empathy and courage, he risked his safety to rescue thousands of children from exploitation and give them a second chance at life. His journey is an inspiring example of how the NBV path often begins with one simple question: *"What can I do to make the world a little better?"*

Kailash Satyarthi's life reminds us that compassion in action creates the most enduring form of legacy.

The Legacy of Anand Mahindra – Growth with Responsibility

Anand Mahindra, Chairman of the Mahindra Group, exemplifies NBV leadership through his futuristic vision and social consciousness.

He transformed the Mahindra Group into a global powerhouse while maintaining a deep commitment to people, planet, and purpose.

His focus on sustainable business, inclusive growth, and youth empowerment demonstrates that leadership is not about authority; it's about accountability.

He often uses his voice to inspire innovation, creativity, and collective growth.

Anand Mahindra's legacy stands as a modern example of responsible capitalism, where success is defined not just by financial results, but by social and ethical impact.

The Legacy of Mary Kom – Perseverance with Purpose

Mary Kom, six-time world boxing champion and Olympic medalist, symbolizes the spirit of resilience and determination.

Coming from humble beginnings, she fought through challenges, stereotypes, and self-doubt to achieve global recognition.

Her legacy is more than her medals—it is her message: that no background, gender, or limitation can stop a person committed to their NBV.

She now inspires millions of young women and athletes to pursue their dreams fearlessly and to rise stronger after every setback.

THE ESSENCE OF AN NBV LEGACY

Every one of these individuals discovered their *Next Best Version* by following their inner calling and serving a cause larger than themselves.

Their legacies are not built on fame or fortune, but on impact, integrity, and inspiration.

“Finding your own NBV is creating a story, and helping others to find their NBV is legacy, and collective NBV is success.”

True legacy begins the moment you choose to live your NBV fully—not just for yourself, but for the growth of others and the betterment of the world.

When you live your NBV, you don’t just create change; you become the change that keeps inspiring others, generation after generation.

MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

As I look back on my journey toward discovering my *Next Best Version* (NBV), I realize that the desire to make a difference has always been at the heart of everything I’ve done. It wasn’t about titles, recognition, or success—it was about creating something meaningful that could touch lives and outlast me.

That belief shaped how I approached work, leadership, and relationships. I've always been driven by the idea that our true purpose in life is to add value—to leave every person, place, or community a little better than we found it.

One of the most defining moments in my journey came when I worked with a non-profit organization that provided education and job training to underprivileged youth. I still remember walking into classrooms filled with young people whose eyes carried both uncertainty and hope. Many came from challenging backgrounds, yet they were eager to learn, to grow, and to rewrite their futures.

During those years, I saw lives being transformed through the power of opportunity. I witnessed how a simple skill, a word of encouragement, or an open door could awaken someone's confidence. Those young people taught me as much as I taught them—about courage, resilience, and the human capacity to rise above limitations.

That experience changed how I defined success. It wasn't about how far I could go, but how many others I could bring along. It made me realize that legacy is not built in moments of glory, but in moments of giving—in the quiet choices we make to help someone else move closer to their own best version.

As I continued my NBV journey, I began to see that the power of legacy is not just in impact, but in inspiration. When we live our truth, others find permission to live theirs. When we grow, we make it easier for others to grow too.

That realization became my compass—guiding how I led teams, mentored people, and built communities. Over time, I came to understand that legacy isn't something we leave behind at the end of our lives; it's something we live and build every day through who we are and how we show up.

There's a quote that I often carry with me: "*What are we living for if not to leave a legacy? It's part of every life that experiences this lovely earth.*"

This has become more than just a quote—it's my personal mantra. It reminds me that life is not about chasing greatness; it's about creating goodness. And in doing so, we become part of something much larger than ourselves.

As I grew through my experiences, I began to see a pattern—I was most inspired when I met people who were in the process of becoming, especially women who were finding strength, purpose, and balance in their own NBV journeys.

I saw women leaders who broke barriers and built bridges. I met teachers who shaped young minds with love, entrepreneurs who blended innovation with integrity, and community builders who created hope in places where there was none. Each of them had a story—not of perfection, but of perseverance.

These encounters stirred something within me. I realized that my purpose was not just to live my NBV, but to capture and celebrate the NBV journeys of others.

That insight became the foundation of my next aspiration: to create a space where stories of transformation could be shared and celebrated.

As I move forward, my NBV legacy aspiration is clear: to collect, curate, and share stories of people—especially women—who found their *Next Best Version* in their own way. I want to showcase the power of everyday heroes, those who may never seek the spotlight, but who shine through their authenticity, kindness, and courage.

Because I believe that when we share our stories, we don't just connect—we collectively grow. Each story becomes a mirror for someone else's possibility, a light for someone's next step, a reminder that progress, not perfection, defines our path.

“Finding your own NBV is creating a story, and helping others to find their NBV is legacy, and collective NBV is success.”

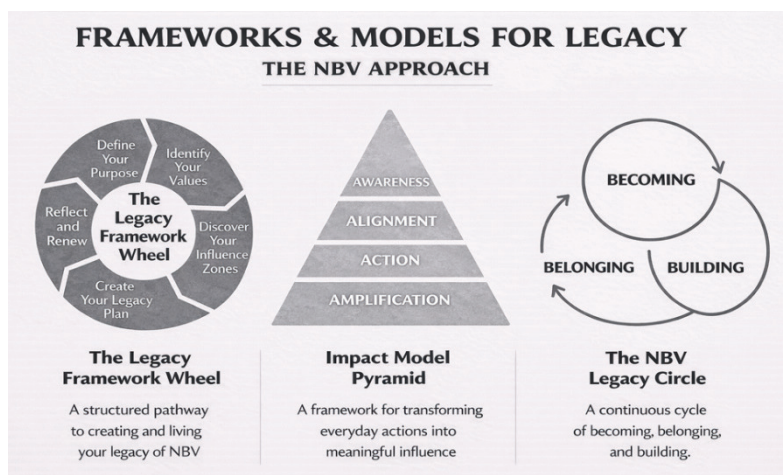
This is what inspires me to continue this journey. My hope is that as I tell my story and share the stories of others, readers will be inspired to reflect on their own: to find their voice, their courage, and their purpose.

A GLIMPSE INTO WHAT COMES NEXT

As I look ahead, I’m excited to bring together diverse voices of women leaders who have each found their NBV in their own extraordinary ways. These are stories of courage, conviction, and contribution—of women who turned struggles into strength, dreams into reality, and purpose into impact.

Their journeys remind us that there is no single path to becoming our best selves. Each woman’s story adds a new colour to the canvas of NBV proving that leadership, resilience, and compassion can take many forms.

Through these voices, I hope to build a collective narrative of strength and growth—a legacy of women who not only found their *Next Best Version*, but helped others find theirs too.



FRAMEWORKS AND MODELS FOR LEAVING A LEGACY OF NBV

While leaving a legacy often begins with inspiration and purpose, it also benefits from clarity and structure. Frameworks and models can help us translate our intentions into action turning personal growth into meaningful, lasting impact.

The following frameworks can serve as practical guides for anyone seeking to create their *Next Best Version* legacy—a legacy that uplifts, inspires, and endures.

1. THE LEGACY FRAMEWORK

The Legacy Framework offers a simple, structured approach to building a meaningful and sustainable impact. It helps individuals and leaders move from intent to implementation, ensuring their values are lived, not just stated.

Step 1: Define Your Purpose

Start by identifying why you want to leave a legacy. What drives you? What change do you wish to see in the world? Clarity of purpose gives direction to your efforts and ensures that your legacy reflects your deepest intentions.

Step 2: Identify Your Core Values

Your legacy is a reflection of what you stand for. Define 3–5 values that guide your decisions, behaviors, and relationships. Examples: integrity, compassion, learning, service, innovation, or faith.

Step 3: Discover Your Influence Zones

Understand where and how you can make the greatest impact through family, community, profession, mentoring, social service, or creative contribution. Each of us has different spheres of influence where our NBV can shine.

Step 4: Create Your Legacy Plan

Translate your values and purpose into action. Define specific initiatives or practices that align with your vision, such as mentoring young professionals, supporting education, promoting wellness, or documenting your learnings.

Step 5: Live It Every Day

Legacy is not built at the end of life; it is lived daily. Align your actions, relationships, and decisions with your purpose. Lead with authenticity and consistency.

Step 6: Reflect and Renew

Revisit your legacy vision periodically. Growth is continuous as you evolve, your legacy deepens. Reflect on your journey, learn from your experiences, and refine your impact along the way.

Key Thought:

“Legacy is not something you leave behind—it’s something you live into.”

2. THE IMPACT MODEL

The Impact Model focuses on how our everyday actions create ripple effects in the lives of others. It helps us understand that our NBV legacy is built not just on what we do, but on how we make others feel and grow.

Stage 1: Awareness—Know Your Influence

Recognize that every person you interact with is impacted by you in some way. Awareness is the first step in intentional impact.

Stage 2: Alignment—Act with Purpose

Align your behaviour and decisions with your core purpose and NBV principles. When actions match intention, trust and credibility grow naturally.

Stage 3: Action—Lead through Example

Demonstrate your NBV values through consistent action. Be the role model who practices what you preach in family, work, and community life.

Stage 4: Amplification—Empower Others

Share your knowledge, experiences, and wisdom so others can grow. Encourage mentorship, collaboration, and co-creation. True impact multiplies when others are empowered to find their NBV.

Stage 5: Continuity – Sustain the Impact

Build systems, networks, or communities that carry your vision forward. This ensures your legacy continues to live, even when you're no longer actively involved.

Key Insight:

Your true impact is measured not by how much you achieve, but by how deeply you inspire others to achieve their own potential.

3. THE NBV LEGACY CIRCLE (A SYNTHESIZED MODEL)

To integrate both the Legacy Framework and the Impact Model, we can visualize the NBV Legacy Circle—a continuous, self-renewing process of Becoming, Belonging, and Building.

Becoming:

Live your personal NBV—keep evolving, learning, and growing from within.

Belonging:

Contribute to others' journeys—nurture, mentor, and collaborate to create shared progress.

Building:

Shape systems, cultures, or initiatives that sustain collective growth and reflect your values over time. The circle reminds us that legacy

is not a destination—it's an ongoing cycle of learning, giving, and uplifting.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Creating a legacy of NBV is not a one-time project—it's a lifelong commitment.

By using these frameworks, we can turn reflection into action and ensure that our purpose translates into impact.

The greatest legacies are not carved in stone, but in the lives of people we touch.

Each day offers us a new opportunity to live our NBV—with clarity, compassion, and courage.

“Your story becomes your legacy when it inspires others to begin their own.”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Leaving a legacy of NBV can create a lasting impact that outlasts us.
2. It can increase our sense of purpose and improve our relationships.
3. There are many ways to make a difference and leave a legacy.
4. Frameworks and models can help guide our efforts.

REFLECTION INSIGHT

By leaving a legacy of NBV, we create ripples that extend beyond our time—inspiring and motivating others to live with purpose, compassion, and courage.

Legacy is not something we leave after life; it is something we live into every day.

“The best way to predict your future is to create it.”

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CONCLUSION

EMBRACING THE JOURNEY OF NEXT BEST VERSION (NBV)

As we come to the close of this journey together, I want to leave you with a thought that sits at the very heart of *Next Best Version* (NBV) - it is not a destination. It's a journey that never truly ends.

NBV is a way of living. It's the gentle voice inside you that whispers, "*You can be better, kinder, stronger—not perfect, but improving.*" It's a daily choice to grow, to learn, to rise, and to keep moving forward, no matter what life brings your way.

Think of NBV as a lifelong adventure—not one defined by achievements or titles, but by the small, beautiful moments of becoming. Every sunrise gives us another chance to take one step closer to who we're meant to be. Every setback gives us a reason to begin again, a little wiser, a little braver.

NBV belongs to everyone. It doesn't matter where you come from, what you do, how old you are, or what stage of life you're in. Whether you are a student discovering yourself, a professional building a career, a parent nurturing dreams, or a leader shaping change—NBV is your companion.

It speaks one universal language—the language of growth, courage, and compassion.

Across generations—Gen Alpha, Gen Z, Gen Y, Gen X, Baby Boomers, across nations, cultures, and beliefs, NBV connects us through our shared humanity. It reminds us that, deep down, we are all travellers on the same path—learning, evolving, and trying to become a little better every day.

At its heart, NBV is about your A.S.K.—Attitude, Skills, and Knowledge.

It's about keeping an open mind, nurturing your curiosity, and daring to explore new ways of thinking and being. In a world that's changing faster than ever, NBV helps us stay grounded yet adaptable—it helps us thrive, not just survive.

But here's the truth: you already have everything you need to begin.

You are born with strength, creativity, and a spark that's uniquely yours. What often stands in the way isn't your ability—it's your self-bias. The stories you tell yourself—“*I can't do this,*” “*I'm not enough,*”—can quietly build walls around your potential.

The difference between *can't* and *won't* is powerful.

Can't means there's something to learn.

Won't means you've chosen not to try.

And once you change that story, everything else begins to shift.

Because what you see, think, feel, and do repeatedly—you eventually become.

Surround yourself with people and experiences that lift you higher. Think thoughts that empower you. Act in ways that align with who you want to be.

Your NBV journey starts with a single shift:—a change in how you see yourself.

It asks you to be kind to yourself, to forgive your mistakes, and to believe that you can begin again, as many times as it takes.

Before you can include others, you must include yourself.

Before you can show empathy to the world, you must offer it to your own heart.

Let go of your self-bias that limits growth.

Release self-sympathy that excuses stagnation.

Break the self-stereotypes that define who you think you should be.

When you free yourself from these patterns, your NBV path unfolds naturally—with lightness, with hope, and with joy.

Inclusion and empathy lie at the very soul of NBV. When we lift ourselves, we gain the strength to lift others. When we practice empathy—across generations, genders, and cultures—we begin to heal what divides us.

NBV is not just about you becoming your best self—it's about us becoming our best world.

When individuals grow, communities transform. When compassion replaces competition, workplaces and nations rise together. Imagine a world where every person wakes up each morning asking, “*What can I do today to be my Next Best Version?*”

What a beautiful world that would be—filled with people who lead with love, live with purpose, and learn with humility.

That world begins with you.

So, pause for a moment. Take a deep breath. Reflect on where you are and where you want to go.

Then make one small promise to yourself—a promise to take that next step toward your *Next Best Version*.

Because your *Next Best Version* isn't something ahead of you—it's something within you, waiting to be awakened.

Together, let's build a world where everyone—regardless of age, gender, or background—feels seen, valued, and inspired to grow.

Let's walk this path together—one thought, one action, and one version at a time.

The future is bright. It's full of hope, full of possibility, and it's waiting for you.

Take that first step today. The journey of your *Next Best Version* begins not with change—but with choice.

“Your Next Best Version isn't a place to reach—it's a way to live.”

– CPP

NBV GUIDED REFLECTION SPACE

(A UNIVERSAL REFLECTION TOOL FOR EVERY CHAPTER)

How to Use This NBV Reflection Framework:

This guided reflection space is designed to be used after completing any chapter in this book.

Return to these questions as you move through different stages of your life.

Your answers will evolve — and that evolution is your NBV in motion.

Use this space to track your growth, patterns, insights, and commitments.

Your Next Best Version is built through conscious reflection and intentional action.

NBV GUIDED REFLECTION – TRACK YOUR NEXT BEST VERSION

1. What insight from this chapter resonated most with me?

2. What part of my current life does this insight relate to?

3. Where am I operating below my potential right now?

4. What belief, habit, or fear is limiting my growth?

5. What would my Next Best Version (NBV) do differently in this situation?

6. What is one uncomfortable action I am willing to take?

7. What strengths can I leverage to move forward?

8. Who can support or challenge me in this journey?

9. What small commitment will I make in the next 7 days?

10. If you revisit this reflection in 6 months, what change would make me proud?

Revisit this framework after every chapter. Your answers are the evidence of your evolution.

NBV is not a destination. It is a disciplined reflection in action.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chella Pandian Pitchai is a passionate believer in the power of people, purpose, and possibility. With over 25 years of global experience, he has inspired countless individuals as an HR leader, certified coach, and TEDx speaker. Currently serving as the A global head of DEI, Culture, Values & Belongingness, Talent & Leadership Development at Biocon Biologics, Chella leads transformative initiatives that foster inclusion, innovation, and a culture of belonging.

Chella's journey is a living example of the *Next Best Version* (NBV) philosophy he advocates. He began his professional life as an operator assistant on the shop floor, equipped with just a graduation degree and an unwavering commitment to growth. Through perseverance and continuous learning, he advanced to earn an MBA, complete leadership programs at IIM Bangalore and Duke University, and is now pursuing a PhD at the Swiss School of Business Management.

His remarkable journey—from the shop floor to global leadership—took him across India, Bangkok, and Kuala Lumpur, before returning to Bangalore and Biocon Biologics, where his career first began at the age of 20. Over the years, he has led and developed teams across Europe and Asia, mentored by global leaders from the US and Canada during his tenure with a billion-dollar pharmaceutical company. These experiences shaped his global outlook, inclusive mindset, and human-centered leadership style.

A lifelong learner and educator, Chella serves as an Adjunct Professor at Augsburg University, Germany and Visiting Faculty at prestigious institutions, including IIM Bangalore, the University of Wales, and ISBR. He also serves on the Boards of Directors and Studies of several universities, helping bridge academia and industry.

Chella's leadership has been celebrated globally. He was recently recognized as the Abdul Kalam Award-Most Iconic Leader of the Year 2025 for Women in STEM Development, listed among the Top 100 HR Leaders in India (2024), and ranked among the 501 Most Influential HR Professionals Worldwide. Earlier, he was awarded HR Leader of the Year in Malaysia (2017–2019) for his pioneering contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

A sought-after global speaker, Chella has shared his insights at forums such as UN Women and other international DEI and leadership platforms. His TEDx talk on “*Next Best Version (NBV)*” was the igniting moment that inspired this book and the NBV movement.

Importantly, most of the quotes, models, and frameworks presented in this NBV book are original creations by Chella Pandian Pitchai, developed through his personal reflections, professional experiences, and leadership practice, unless specifically acknowledged or referenced.

Chella's thought leadership and writings have been featured in multiple international and national publications, including Passion Vista, where he was recognized among the Most Admirable Indian Leaders, as well as in *Times* features and influential LinkedIn articles that continue to inspire leaders worldwide.

Beyond his corporate achievements, Chella exemplifies service through action. He has served as President of Rotary Bangalore Health City for two years, leading impactful community initiatives, and remains a mentor to individuals and organizations aspiring to grow with purpose and compassion.

Through his work, words, and wisdom, Chella Pandian Pitchai invites every reader to embark on the journey toward their *Next Best Version (NBV)*—a life of authenticity, learning, and meaningful contribution to the world.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT WITH GRATITUDE

As I pause and look back on my journey of over three decades, my heart overflows with gratitude. The path to finding and living my *Next Best Version* (NBV) has been one of learning, love, growth, and grace, and it would never have been possible without the presence of extraordinary people who believed in me, encouraged me, and walked beside me through every season of life.

Each person who crossed my path—whether for a moment or a lifetime—left behind something precious: a lesson, an insight, a spark of inspiration, or a reminder of who I could become. Some lifted me when challenges felt heavy, others guided me with quiet wisdom, and many simply stood by me with unwavering faith. Their kindness and belief have been the invisible threads weaving together the tapestry of my journey.

No words, nor any number of pages, could fully express what my heart holds in gratitude. I know there are many who may not find their names within these lines, yet their presence lives deeply within my memories, my work, and the person I've become.

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The trust she placed in people, her vision, and the leadership I observed in action shaped my character and continue to guide me toward my Next Best Version. I have never stopped admiring or drawing inspiration from her journey—her strength, humility, and belief in people remain a constant beacon that continues to light my path.

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that becoming one's Next Best Version is not a moment, but a disciplined commitment to continuous growth, inspiring me to act and evolve with intent in my future.

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It is a 360-degree support guidance and enablement; I have not mentioned 100s of more people who made a difference, but I will

keep showing my gratitude every time I get an opportunity with them.

IN REFLECTION

As I look back on this journey, I am filled with deep gratitude and humility. Your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not just a book I wrote—it is a tapestry woven from the guidance, kindness, and inspiration of countless people who walked beside me through different seasons of life.

The story of Your *Next Best Version* (NBV) is not mine alone. It belongs to every person who has touched my path, every mentor who shared wisdom, every colleague who believed in possibility, every friend who offered light in dark moments, and every loved one whose quiet presence gave strength.

Every mentor who guided me, every colleague who collaborated, every friend who listened, and every family member who stood by me—you are part of this story. Your energy, compassion, and belief have shaped not only my journey, but also the heart of this book.

To all who have been part of my life—whether your contribution was a conversation, an idea, a smile, or a shared moment—please know that your presence mattered. You have each played a role in helping me become who I am today, and your influence continues to ripple through everything I do.

Your impact goes far beyond what words can contain. You have shaped not just my professional path but my spirit. You have reminded me that growth is never an individual pursuit; it is something we experience through connection, community, and compassion.

This book, and the person behind it, are both the result of countless contributions—some grand, others subtle, but all significant. Together, you have shown me that our *Next Best Versions* are not

built in isolation, but through the love, guidance, and encouragement of those who walk beside us.

This book, therefore, is a celebration of you—the people who believed in the power of growth, connection, and purpose. It is a reflection of the many hearts that helped me write, live, and embody the spirit of NBV.

As I close this segment of gratitude, I do so with a full heart—thankful for the hands that lifted me, the voices that inspired me, and the hearts that believed in me. You are all part of my journey, my purpose, and my evolution.

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Thank you for being part of my story, my growth, and my becoming.

Thank you for being part of my NBV journey and for inspiring me to continue striving toward my *Next Best Version* every single day.

With heartfelt gratitude and appreciation,

Chella Pandian Pitchai (CPP)

WHAT'S NEXT ON NBV

Every journey has a moment...

A moment when you close one chapter, yet somehow feel the beginning of another rising within you.

As I write these final lines of *Find Your NBV (Next Best Version)*, I feel exactly that. Not an ending...

but a quiet spark.

A whisper that says, "*There's more. Much more.*"

This book began as a reflection of my own search—a journey carved through struggle, humility, purpose, and rediscovery. But somewhere along the way, something unexpected happened.

The NBV journey stopped being mine alone.

It became yours.

It became ours.

Each page you turned...

Each thought you paused to feel...

Each question you allowed to settle in your heart...

Added life to the NBV movement in a way I could have never done alone.

Because NBV has never been about perfection.

NBV has always been about becoming—step by step, breath by breath, moment by moment.

It is a path shaped not by where you stand today, but by who you choose to become next.

And now, as this chapter closes, the horizon opens.

A new story is calling.

A deeper truth is waiting.

And the NBV journey is about to unfold in a direction that is powerful, raw, and long overdue.

NBV – PART 2: “THE MANY FACES OF NBV”

The next book in this journey will spotlight voices that deserve to be heard...

stories that carry fire...

stories that rise from quiet resilience, unspoken strength, and unshakable spirit.

These are the stories of women—

leaders, dreamers, caregivers, creators, warriors in their own worlds—

women who rebuild themselves again and again,

not in applause,

but in silence.

Women who redefine success not by how the world measures them, but by how deeply they stay rooted in purpose, courage, and truth.

Their journeys challenge us to ask:

- What does it really mean to succeed?
- Is victory something you win outside, or something you awaken within?
- Can you rise without losing yourself?
- Can you lead and still remain deeply human?

These stories will not just inspire you.

They will shake something awake inside you.

They will remind you that no matter who you are or where you stand—

your next chapter is waiting,

your next version is forming,

your next truth is unfolding.

And as I prepare to bring these voices to the world, I leave you with a thought that captures the soul of the NBV journey:

“Becoming your Next Best Version is not about becoming someone new...

it is about awakening the greatness that has always lived within you.”

The curtain may fall on this book...

but the story is far from over.

The journey deepens.

The horizon widens.

And the best—the very best—is yet to come.

Stay with me.

The next chapter is already rising...