



## life style

Any questions write to [mamta@thinkspalondon.com](mailto:mamta@thinkspalondon.com)  
By Mamta Saha  
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### Pearls of wisdom

This weeks article is going to focus on motivation, confidence, engaging others and living your values at work. I have been lucky enough to explore some alternative perspectives on these topics by speaking to Aekta Mahajan (A) and Pratik Dattani (P). Both have been successful in their careers and life through experience, hard work and focus. Read ahead to learn the psychology of their success.

1. How do you stay motivated?

(A) I recognise the importance of fulfilling my personal goals and I try to clearly define these at the outset. I then link each task, however cumbersome it may appear to be back to the overarching personal goals I've set for myself. This helps me to understand the importance of doing whatever is required to fulfil my personal goals and as a result I stay self-motivated.

(P) For me, self-motivation comes from knowing what I want to achieve and the timeline in which I want to do it. It gives me focus and drive – the motivation follows from there.

2. What advice would you give to someone who lacks confidence?

(A) To believe in himself or herself and to realise that everyone has the capability to do anything. Usually people who lack confidence think negatively and always fear the worst so I would encourage them to confront these fears and to write down "what is the worst that could happen" in a particular scenario. By doing this and by thinking positively, they should feel more confident in their ability to do what they set out to do.

(P) It is a spiral – low confidence begets a lack of access to the opportunities you want, and the lack of opportunities results in further low confidence. Make a

list of what you want to achieve in an ideal world, find a sponsor for each of those things (i.e. someone more experienced who does those things well that you feel comfortable talking to) and ask them to help you reach your goal. People are happy to help, but you need to ask the question.

3. How do you best engage others?

(A) I try to understand the personal interests / motivations of others and then connect any messages that I want to convey back to their personal interests. For example, if I am trying to convince someone to support a charity, I would emphasise the benefits to them rather than focusing purely on the benefits to the charity.

(P) All five digits on your hand are different sizes. In the same way, everyone around you responds to different stimulations. You need to find these and tailor your approach to each person – you need patience because it can be hard work in the short-term, but it pays off in the long-term.

4. What advice would you give to best manage upwards?

(A) Take some time out to fully understand your managers. Every manager is different and has different preferences / styles. Depending on your manager's style, I try and tailor my communication and working approach accordingly so for example since my manager is very busy, always short of time and prefers verbal communication - I avoid emails and instead get more face time through setting regular 1:1s with them so I get instant feedback.

(P) Make the life of the person above you easier by being proactive, flag up issues early and give constructive feedback.

5. How can you live your values at work?

(A) I think it is incredibly important to work in an organisation that is closely aligned to your personal values, so I would stress the importance of researching this in advance. It's not uncommon, to ask at an interview about an organisation or team's values, culture or ways of working. This makes it far easier for you to "be yourself at work". When you are working in organisation where your values don't fully align, I would advise people to not be afraid of sharing their personal values with stakeholders at work. This should help the stakeholders understand and acknowledge your values and subsequently should make you more comfortable in pushing back any actions that may not align with your personal values. This comes back to being confident enough in your ability to recognise that you can produce excellent outcomes without having too compromise on "how they are delivered".

(P) It can be difficult, depending on the job. I find 'constrained discretion' helps – I set myself a framework with outer bounds of what I would and wouldn't consider being in line with my values. Then with that 'constraint', I give myself complete discretion on how to apply them – whatever I do, I know I will be working in the bounds of what is internally consistent with my value system.

Due to high demand I am now conducting Skype and phone coaching, if you are interested in learning more about this contact me: [mamta@thinkspalondon.com](mailto:mamta@thinkspalondon.com). Alternatively you may prefer attending a training course, in which case register on [thinkspalondon.com](http://thinkspalondon.com). Stay connected on Facebook and Twitter. Good luck and god bless.



## Mahabharata In divine light



By Rajen Vakil

### Inner Development of Nala

When Nala was in Ayodhya, Damayanti was staying in Cedi. She did not reveal her true identity but had told the queen mother how she lost her husband and was looking for him. In the kingdom of Vidharbha, Damayanti's father was concerned at the whereabouts of Nala and Damayanti after hearing the news that Nala had lost everything in a game of dice. He called a large group of Brahmins and asked them to travel in different directions and promised to reward whoever brought news of Nala and Damayanti. One of the Brahmins whose name was Sudeva reached Ayodhya. There in the palace he caught a glimpse of Damayanti and recognised her immediately. Damayanti too knew him as he was a friend of her brother.

On seeing him, Damayanti started crying and this was being observed by the queen mother from afar. She called Sudeva and asked him who he was and how he knew Damayanti. Sudeva told her Damayanti's story and this brought tears to the queen mother's eyes. She went up to Damayanti and told her, "You are my sister's daughter; I had last seen you when you were born, and your mother had come to our father's kingdom to give birth to you." The queen mother narrated how she had rubbed some skin off Damayanti's forehead so everyone could see the mole showing her high bearing. Damayanti then asked the queen mother to send her to her father's kingdom. This she did and Damayanti, after a long period of pain and suffering, met with her parents.

Once in her father's house, Damayanti immediately called many Brahmins and asked them to go out again and look for Nala. She asked them to recite this verse wherever they went. "O deceiver, after tearing half my dress and leaving me alone in the jungle, where did you go." A Brahmin called Parnad reached the court of Rituparna, where Nala (as Bahuka) was present. Here, he sang the verse as Damayanti had told him. The words of Parnad hurt Nala and he went to him and said, "Ladies of a high family have the inherent wisdom to save themselves even in the worst of circumstances. If her husband left her, she would understand that he had lost his kingdom and what he was going through, and it was



not right for her to get angry."

Parnad went back to Vidharbha and reported this conversation to Damayanti, who realised that even though his appearance was ugly and different, it had to be Nala. She then devised a plan to force Nala to reveal himself. She calls Sudeva and tells him to go to Ayodhya and announce in Rituparna's court that Damayanti, the princess of Vidharbha, was going to marry again and the swayamvara to choose her husband would take place the following morning. She knew that except Nala, no other person could reach Vidharbha in such little time and this would force him to come out of hiding.

When Rituparna hears that Damayanti is remarrying, he gets very excited as her beauty and virtues were well known. He calls Bahuka and tells him that he would like to reach Vidharbha by sunrise and only he could make that possible. Bahuka was also shocked that Damayanti is marrying again and wanted to reach Vidharbha as soon as possible to find out why. He told Rituparna that he would choose the horses so that they could leave immediately.

When Rituparna saw the horses that Bahuka had chosen, he scolded him saying such thin horses would never be able to take them so far. Then Bahuka showed Rituparna special marks on the forehead, on the top of the head, on each of their shoulders, on their chests, and on their backs. When he saw the marks, Rituparna praised Bahuka for his skill. Even Nala's old charioteer, Varshneya, who was present there was shocked at this skill. The three of them then started out for Vidharbha and Rituparna was shocked at the speed at which they were passing rivers, mountains, lakes and valleys.

Now let us try to find hidden meanings in the story till here. We saw that Nala is the real 'I' or controller within us. In all of us, this real 'I' is asleep and needs to be awak-

ened. This is done by developing the power to observe and control. This power is called Damayanti. We have also seen that the inner observer acquires this power by marrying her. But he cannot hold on to this. In a small lapse of unawareness he loses the power.

To acquire it again and also hold on to it requires two things: (1) Depicted by Nala having mastery over horses – this is symbolic of feelings and emotions. He has mastery over the instinctive and emotional centres, but he is still not a master of his thinking centre which is symbolised by the lack of knowledge of the dice. Nala loses everything in the game of dice. He has to acquire this knowledge and art from Rituparna. Only then, in Gurdjieff's language, he would have developed both higher thinking and higher emotion; the latter he already had. (2) All our happiness is dependent upon life fulfilling our desires through gaining objects of the senses. Nala's two children were named Indrasen and Indrasena, whom Damayanti sends to her father's kingdom. Their names mean army of the senses. This implies the enjoyment he gets from objects of the senses. Now he must develop the power to enjoy and be happy from within which is not dependant on any desire being fulfilled. This is the real source of happiness that lies hidden in all of us. Only when Nala acquires this, will he be able to hold the power called Damayanti.

The marks on the horses are very significant – forehead signifies logical thinking, top of the head the power of divinity, whereas the shoulders show strength, love, and surrender. The chest shows generosity and the back the power to lift a burden.

Next week we will see how Nala frees himself from Kali and is reunited with Damayanti.

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### HAPPY TIMES ☺ ☺ ☺

.....please do not try such risky experiments in an effort to save money on fuel



### Indian President to disclose assets

Indian President Pratibha Patil is all set to declare her assets and set an example for ministers and bureaucrats to do so. Earlier this month, the prime minister had reminded the ministers about the annual declaration of assets and business interests along with that of their spouses. Former cabinet secretary K M Chandrasekhar had also written to the ministers on this on June 2. More than 600 IAS officers of the 4,000-odd in the service have missed the May 31 deadline for declaration of assets, and the list of movable and immovable properties of IPS officers are still trickling in.

All past articles on the Mahabharata can be accessed from <http://epaper.asianvoice.com> or from <http://www.3stepbreath.com/mahabharata.html>