

**GURU
GUIDE**
with
Vidusha and Anton

in conversation with
Tharindu Amunugama

9

**HOW TO KICK YOUR
OWN ASS
OUT OF LETHARGY**

A QUICK INTRODUCTION TO THE GURU GUIDE

The 'Guru Guide' is an attempt to refine decades of hard-earned expertise into succinct, simple and practical advice.

It is NOT meant to be an exhaustive exploration of a topic: rather, pointed areas of focus which can only be discerned by a practitioner. It is not meant to be a generic set of advice: it is advice from battle-hardened professionals who have had a lifetime of experience and proven track records.

The Guru Guide has a pre determined format:

- ✓ It aims to understand a topic/ area of focus
- ✓ It aims to give tools to help you navigate the area
- ✓ It also gives contexts and examples: so that you can customize it to suit YOU

Exploratory, intimate and insightful, the Guru Guide aims to bring to you a wealth of expertise which can only be possible through veterans whose varied and in-depth experiences offer unparalleled insights.

The brevity and simplicity is by choice, and design. Focused on Executives and Managers who want to get quick tips and techniques, who are eager to improve their craft

and trade : the Guru Guide aims to offer 'little nuggets' of advice and importantly, simple tools, which will enable practitioners to up their game and benefit from expertise which may be hard to find in a hurry.

INTRODUCING



**VIDUSHA
NATHAVITHARANA**

Vidusha is currently the Destiny Architect at High5 Consultancy and Luminary Learning and the organization's founder. His areas of expertise are with strategy facilitation, HR strategy development and Leadership Training. He has conducted assignments in 15 countries regionally and consulted for the World Bank, the UN as well as some of the top corporates in Sri Lanka and the Region. He is also a member of the board of directors for Chrysalis, a social enterprise working to empower women and youth by fostering inclusive growth in Sri Lanka and elsewhere.



**ANTON
THAYALAN**

Anton is a multi-faceted professional who has had over two decades of hands-on experience in process improvement, change management and strategic management, and currently works as the Chief Evangelist of Luminary Learning and the Transformation Therapist of High5 Consultancy. As the former AVP at HSBC DPL Anton won accolades for his superlative work there: and won the prestigious HSBC Group Service – Global Talent Management Member two years in a row. Anton currently works as a consultant focusing on efficiency and productivity improvement and process optimization for local and regional clients.

INTRODUCING THARINDU AMUNUGAMA

Tharindu was one of those who excelled in the corporate sector in Investment Banking, until he decided to 'simplify' his life.... Today, he is a wanderer, explorer, bodybuilder, avid reader, a personal fitness coach and also, a Management Consultant...

Tharindu's passion for all things Sri Lanka sees him in wayward corners of the resplendent isle : and taking photographs that are absolutely breathtaking. Traveling light, and traveling often, Tharindu explores caves, climbing sheer cliff mountains and treacherous ravines to take that 'perfect shot' and also for the heck of it.... It is no exaggeration that he has explored this little island we all call home, like no other...

Tharindu's approach to life in general, and his personal coaching, is rather unique - in that a lot is done to 'get the right attitude' as much as 'getting the right nutrition and exercise' regimes... He understands that if focused discipline sets in, then, half the battle is already won - and this is why we spoke to him on Guru Guide...



WHAT MADE YOU GET INTO FITNESS AND WELL-BEING?



Having seen the negative impact on personal life of many friends and colleagues who do the usual 'corporate grind" , especially health wise , and the severe implications that lead to loss of quality of life to themselves and to their families made me reassess my life choices: what was I doing professionally and how much attention was I paying to my own well-being, also how much of a real benefit was there to myself and others in activities that I spent time on.

This is especially since we have a finite quantum of time left in this world, for e.g. if one is 40 years old, he/she would approximately have another 40 years of useful life left, that equals to about 2000 weekends – not too much time! Therefore one has to prioritize and make the maximum use of time left.

IS IT LETHARGY OR JUST BEING HAPPY WITH WHO YOU ARE THAT STOPS PEOPLE FROM REALLY 'PUSHING THEMSELVES' ?

IT'S A MIX OF MANY FACTORS

- » We are 'mised' to focus on objectives that are not really important in the grand scheme of things for example striving to meet sales targets at the price of compromising one's own health does not make sense. If health deteriorates to a level where he/she cannot work, he/she will be replaced and the individual and his loved ones will have to bear the brunt of his/her bad health. Also, it's a bad situation for the company too, since it has to expend its resources to find a suitable replacement and to compensate the now ex-employee to a certain extent, as per labour regulations.
- » People exist in their own comfort zones without realizing that such existence at times can be detrimental to themselves; if they themselves knew the repercussions, perhaps they would work towards negating the potential harm. For example not knowing the adverse implications of bad nutritional choices, especially with added sugar content and processed food.
- » Lethargy: where one has comprehensive knowledge of what is 'bad' – but lacks the spark or the enthusiasm to change! I believe this will remain so, till one really has to pay the 'price' for the bad habits and practices!
- » However, if you want more - of your self - of your life - well then, you must be able to get off your rear and work on it - this is when knowing how to kick your own ass becomes handy...

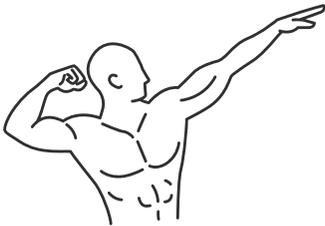
WHAT'S THE POINT THOUGH - HAVING A BUFFED BODY IS NOT ALL THERE IS TO LIFE ISN'T IT ?



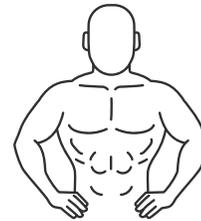
» True... A six pack isn't the be all and end all of life - even for me...



» It's not about the body - or the muscles - its about being able to get what you want : and the satisfaction you feel when you do...



» Happiness is just that isn't it : it's not what you get - or what you don't : its about getting what YOU want. If you are a millionaire - but it isn't what YOU want - and what YOU wanted was to have a quiet life in the countryside, then, even if you have the plushiest, trendiest and hippest condo in the heart of London you are still going to be miserable.



» See - everyone looks at my outward appearance and think that's all there is - but it isn't. I got into it because I wanted to change - and that was intensely personal to me. It was my personal challenge to pit myself against : and I am bloody glad I did. What it taught me, helps me in other aspects of my life in general : and after a while, the principles you learn from overcoming one obstacle seeps into other aspects of your life in general - and that is when you understand how important it is to be able to commit - and do it - and reflect...

CONCEPT 1 : BE HONEST ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT



It all honestly starts with asking yourself what you want to change about yourself : and being honest about it.

None of us are really happy with everything about us - if anyone says that I honestly think they are lying. We all want to be better at something or the other : its as 'normal' as it gets...

So, why not ask yourself the simple question : what do I really want out of my life : and which of those are priorities : and make a small list of key priorities you want to work on ? Now.... Be honest. Don't try to bullshit yourself on this : you need to be bone honest : because ultimately, you've got to live with yourself (even if no one else has to !)

IF you REALLY want to get out of lethargy - there needs to be something you REALLY want to do.... Till this sets in, there really isn't a fire that gets you going !

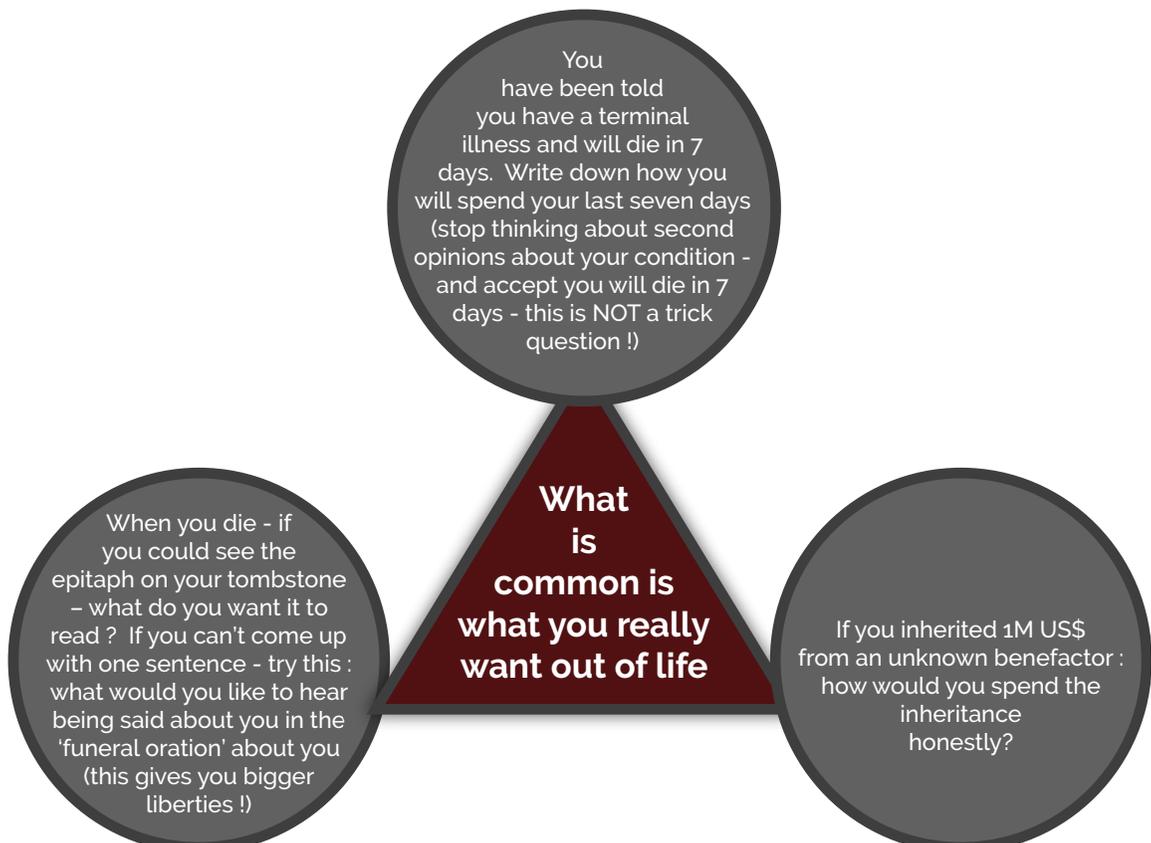


TOOL 1 : 3 SIMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF IF YOU REALLY HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT WHAT YOU REALLY WANT...

Most people actually struggle to spell out what they really want out of their lives... What people tend to do is to look a few years ahead of themselves and peg some 'milestones' - which are rather short-term rather than really core things that are important for them...

Most of the time also, you fixate on what you don't have - rather than digging deeper and asking yourself who you want to be - and what REALLY matters to you. You cannot react to what is around you and then realise these things - you need to dig a little deeper - because ultimately, there is little point in putting a whole lot of effort into something that isn't really important to you...

Struggling : Do this exercise and you will figure it out in a jiffy...



CONCEPT 2 : ONE SMALL THING - EVERY DAY

The easiest way to do anything revolves around doing something small towards it EVERYDAY. This is something you learn when you do bodybuilding. You can't really workout for 5 hours one day and then take a break for 5 days - and this averages out to an hour's workout every day... Muscles don't grow that way : success doesn't either... So, commit to something - anything - daily - as a ritual...

The issue is that we tend to 'miss' our schedules and then slip back into not doing anything : so, here are some simple things :

»» Do it first thing in the morning - so that it is out of the way

»» If you can't do this - commit a certain time - and get into the habit of doing it at that time - you will find that you start 'missing it' after a few weeks if you haven't done it

»» If you miss your 'appointment' then, let it go, don't berate yourself.... Just make sure you NEVER allow two missed days at a stretch

»» Build in a small reward for yourself at the end of each week/month so as to remind yourself that you have 'done it'

TOOL 2 : KEEPING A DIARY/SCORE CARD...

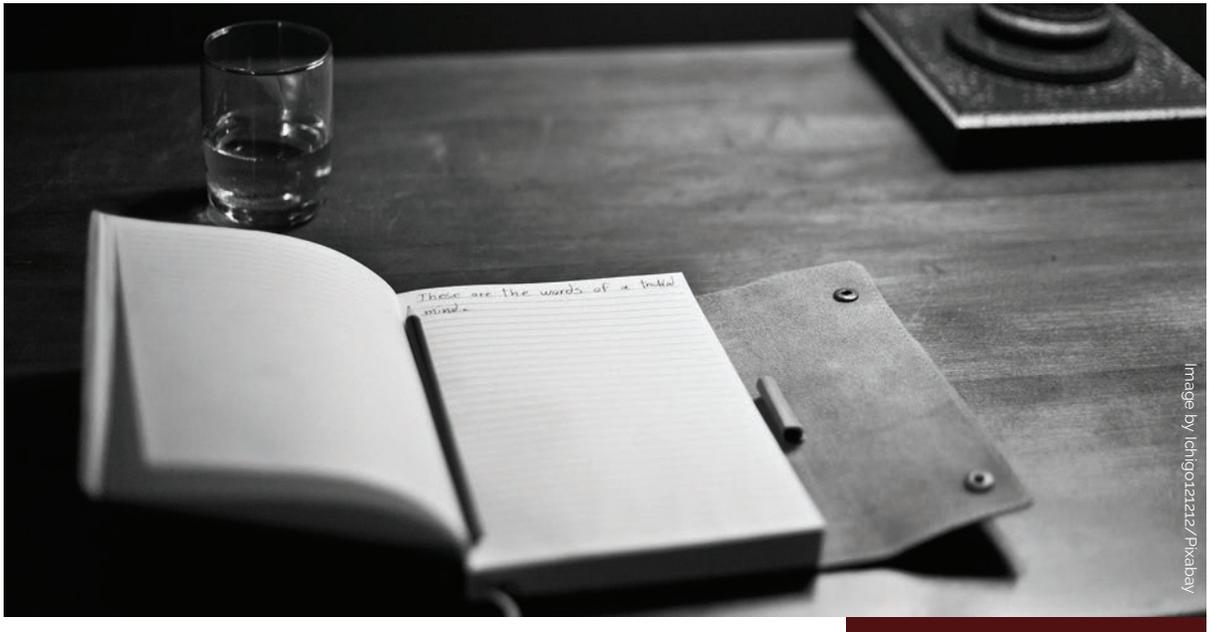


Image by Ichigoz1212/Pixabay

Sounds simple enough ha - and trust me - it works...

Having to WRITE what you do daily is a meditative thing - and also, something that actually holds you accountable - daily - for what you have done - and not done. Writing is also therapeutic - and allows you to reflect...

So, whatever you have committed to - write your progress daily. Imagine you wanted to lose weight by simply watching your diet and walking 20 minutes each day. Start writing down what you ate for each meal and whether you walked or not daily - and summarise it weekly and see what happens...

Without you realising it, you will see that you are actually tracking your performance - and also, getting into the habit of holding yourself accountable. You know you can't lie to yourself on this - and also, whenever you miss a day - you will have a certain guilty feeling that will spur you to action on the next day...

Try it - and you will be amazed at how much it will help you...

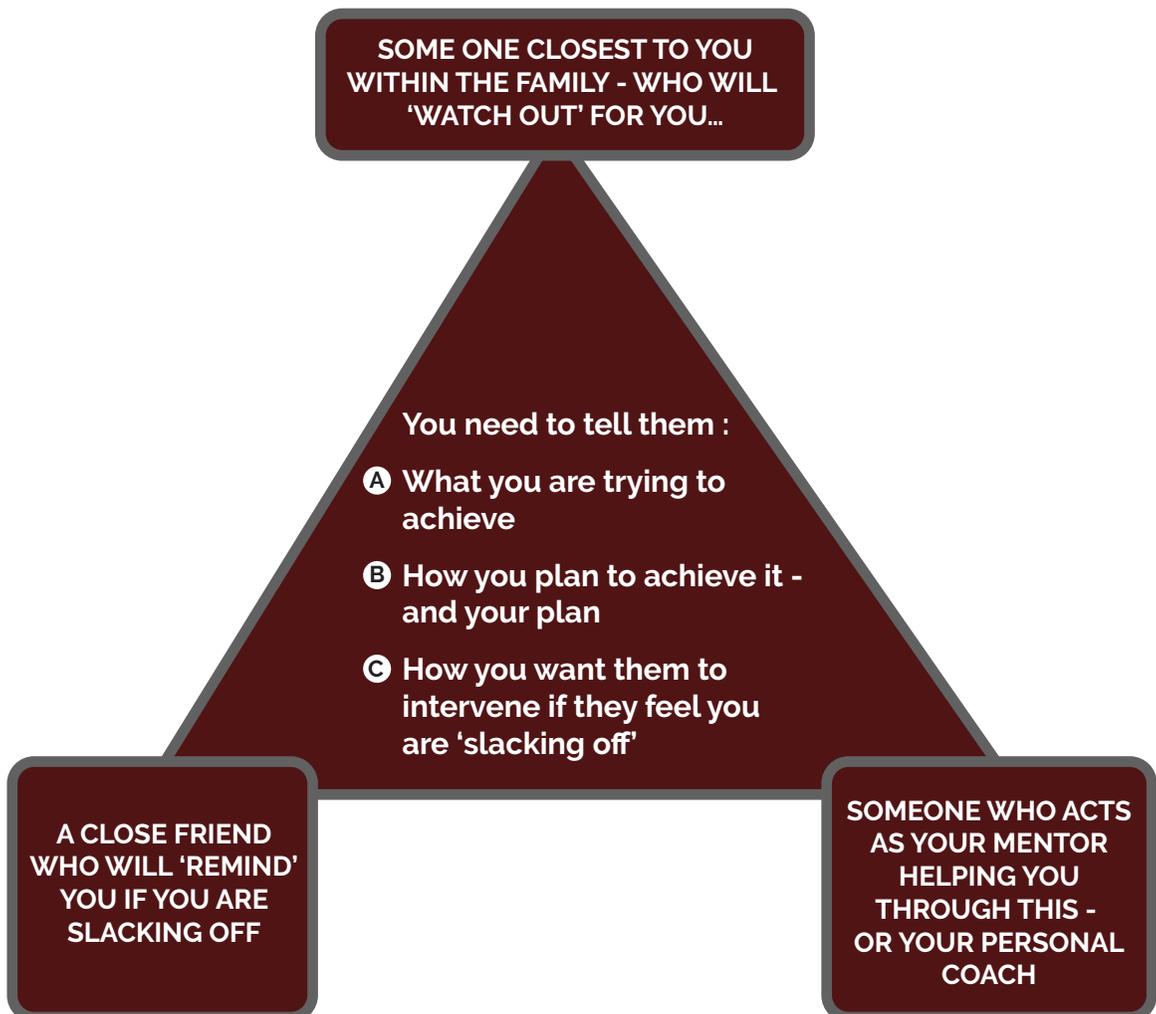
CONCEPT 3 : NOT ALLOWING YOURSELF TO SLACK OFF



- » Continuity is always an issue.
- » We all get a little lazy...
- » We all get a little burnt out...
- » We all get a little bored...
- » This is when you need to really watch yourself : and sometimes, you DO need a little help from others...
- » But, this is an ecosystem you need to build for yourself - and as such, it is still very much something YOU need to ensure you get off your ass...

TOOL 3 : 3 SUPPORT STRUCTURES TO KEEP YOU IN CHECK

Building in support structures is something you must be able to do for yourself. Without them it is sometimes difficult to go through rough patches we will all have in our lives. The support structure you need to build needs to be multi-faceted - so that there are always contingencies in place...



SOME PIECES OF ADVICE...



- » Anyone can be fit and healthy, irrespective of age, status, disability and bad health. What matters is that there is a method to it, as explained earlier.
- » Not necessary to take extreme measures, it's a marathon not a sprint. Be kind to yourself but be disciplined too
- » Assigning a higher purpose to what you do. For instance, you are setting an example for your child

WHAT HIS CLIENTS ARE SAYING...

“ I had moved to Jaffna and my work schedule included long hours of travel and time seated in the office chair and meetings. And I was forced to get into shape due to a health issue that the doctor felt could be overcome if I strengthen my core. My waist was 39 inches at that time (April 2017).

Started by walking which lasted four months. Then I started going to a local gym (Northern Fitness run by Shankar) due to an invitation from a friend. After four months of gyming on my own I reached out to Tharindu via FB. The journey of Transformation and adventure thus began.

He initially advised me on my eating habits over the phone since we were 450 kms apart. We met up in Colombo after a couple of months and things started to happen. Work out schedules that were periodically adjusted to fit into my work and travel schedules were prescribed by Tharindu. Planned meals that were authentic, Sri Lankan, natural, healthy that were low and complex carb, rich in fibre, and glycaemic index were introduced to the family kitchen. Processed Sugar was avoided, and natural sugar was rediscovered in the home.

My waist reduced to 31 inches within a year. Weight was never an issue for me. Visceral fat was. I'm now healthy. Mobility has increased. For example, I could not even use the squat position earlier. I used to get the common cold that leads to a persistent cough that lasted for months which has completely disappeared now. Hiatus hernia is an issue of the past now.

A person who has struggled with a slip disk since 17 is able to do 100kg deadlifts which was something beyond my imagination 4 years ago. This is contagious as my wife and two children have joined me. Many of my friends and colleagues feel inspired and attempt at the transformation.

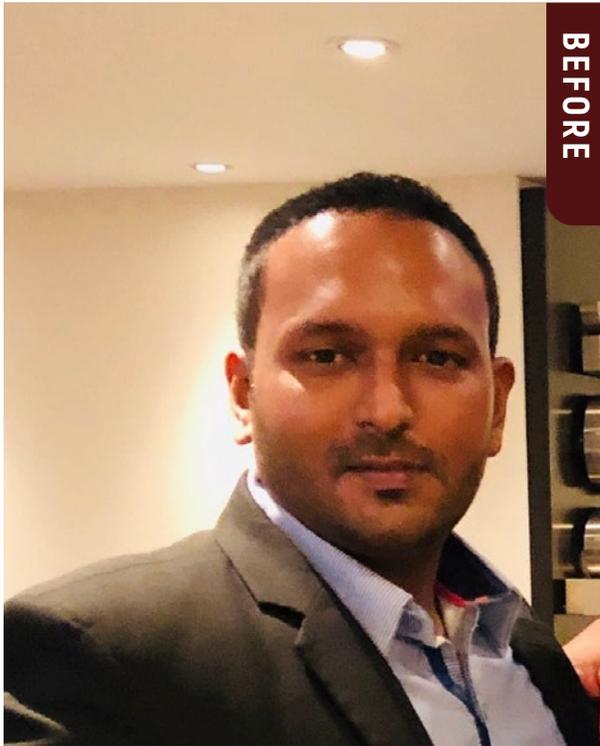
What is important is that Tharindu explains the logic and science behind the transformation which is basically a lifestyle change. It is not about going on a diet for a specified period. But something that becomes sustainable and lifelong. The workout schedules are custom made and what is prescribed to me and my brother are so different as two persons are so uniquely and wonderfully made.

Other than health we discuss faith, politics, archaeology, literature, culture etc. We meet up, have coffee, go on hikes and sightseeing which makes it a friendship more than an instructor-client relationship. ”

Father Samuel Ponniah



WHAT HIS CLIENTS ARE SAYING...



“Tharindu has been amazing through my journey to become fit again. He is incredibly passionate about what he does and explains what we're doing and why, all the time.

I've learned so much, not only about getting in shape, but also about how the different muscles connect and work.

Tharindu helped me to recover from injuries which I have been suffering for many years. I feel so confident now and I have the tools to continue exercising on my own and the knowledge I gained will benefit both myself and my family for the rest of our lives. ”

Amry Azeez

Managing Director

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