

SANTIAGO DOESN'T DO DIFFERENT THINGS BUT DOES THINGS DIFFERENTLY

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ABSTRACT

*This paper focuses on a versatile personality of Brazilian renowned author Paulo Coelho's hero Santiago, the protagonist of the novel *The Alchemist*. Paulo Coelho's depiction of the theme of quest in this novel substantiates the essential attributes of an individual. In Santiago's spiritual journey, he encounters many a character who polish his intrinsic talent. Along the way, he trysts with interpretations, characters, opportunity, love, adversity and learns a lot about himself and the ways of the world. Santiago proves that he can fit into any environment because of his life-enhancing qualities such as positive attitude, interpersonal skills, goal setting, self-esteem, subconscious mind, motivation, and success. Paulo Coelho meticulously imparts all these qualities in Santiago. These life skills empower Santiago to take a positive action and to succeed in finding the treasure. Spencer Johnson, M.D., co-author of *The One minute Manager* says: "An entrepreneurial tale of universal wisdom we can apply to the business of our own lives".*

Keywords: *Journey, Positive Attitude, Interpersonal Skills, Goal Setting, Self-Esteem*

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on a versatile personality of Brazilian renowned author Paulo Coelho's hero Santiago, the protagonist of the novel *The Alchemist*. Paulo Coelho's depiction of the theme of quest in this novel substantiates the essential attributes of an individual. In Santiago's spiritual journey, he encounters many a character who polish his intrinsic talent. Along the way, he trysts with interpretations, characters, opportunity, love, adversity and learns a lot about himself and the ways of the world. Santiago proves that he can fit into any environment because of his life-enhancing qualities such as positive attitude, interpersonal skills, goal setting, self-esteem, subconscious mind, motivation, and success. Paulo Coelho meticulously imparts all these qualities in Santiago. These life skills empower Santiago to take a positive action and to succeed in finding the treasure. Spencer Johnson, M.D., co-author of *The One minute Manager* says: "An entrepreneurial tale of universal wisdom we can apply to the business of our own lives". Shiv Khera suggests some character traits of an individual. He says that every individual should have some of the essential qualities to succeed in his/her life. He narrates each quality with real time examples. Paulo Coelho clearly shows all these qualities in Santiago in *The Alchemist*. Santiago an Andalusian shepherd boy starts his journey from his home town Spain to Egyptian pyramids. Paulo Coelho's depiction of the theme of the quest in this novel substantiates the essential attributes of an individual. In order to perform well his journey of life, Santiago exhibits high levels of life skills and soft skills in dealing with animals, people, things etc. Basically he possesses adaptability, flexibility, commitment and perseverance.

II. GOAL SETTING

Shiv Khera in *You Can Win* says that knowledge helps a person to reach his goal. Sometimes people confuse goals with dreams. Without proper planning no dream can become a goal. Only with the innate passion of the person can turn dreams into reality. Every individual has to develop strategies to accomplish his/her goals. For example:

“An ancient Indian sage was teaching his disciples the art of archery. He put a wooden bird as the target and asked them to aim at the eye of the bird. The first disciple was asked to describe what he saw. He said, "I see the trees, the branches, the leaves, the sky, the bird and its eye.." The sage asked this disciple to wait. Then he asked the second disciple the same question and he replied, "I only see the eye of the bird." The sage said, "Very good, then shoot." The arrow went straight and hit the eye of the bird". (130-131)

Similarly Santiago turns his dreams into his goal. His family is a small farm family. They work hard throughout the day like sheep work for food and water. His parents want him to become a priest. But he sets his goal to become a traveler when he was a child.

“He had studied Latin, Spanish, and theology. But ever since he had been a child, he had wanted to know the world, and this was much more important to him than knowing God and learning about man’s sins. One afternoon, on a visit to his family, he had summoned up the courage to tell his father that he didn’t want to become a priest. That he wanted to travel”. (8)

He argues with his father and convinced him to become a shepherd as the only people who travel are shepherds. His father blessed him to travel the world which is huge and inexhaustible.

III. POSITIVE ATTITUDE

William James of Harvard University says: "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind."(3). Attitude of a person is noticed at his childhood. This attitude includes three components: an affect (a feeling), cognition (a thought or belief), and behavior (an action). Santiago possesses all these components in his journey of life in different aspects.

The first component is feeling: With the consent of Santiago’s father Santiago becomes a shepherd. He enjoys his life as a shepherd as it allows him to travel. They were content with just food and water and also they generously give of their wool and once in a while their meat. Santiago says that “they are so used to me that they know my schedule.”(4) So they become a part and parcel of his life.

The second component is cognition: Santiago is going to meet the merchant’s daughter shortly. He has got impressed by her physical appearance. “He recognized that he was feeling something he had never experienced before: the desire to live in one place forever”. (6) The last component of attitude is: Santiago is motivated by the words of the old king Melchizedek. He leaves the thought of sticking to a place and starts his journey to the Egyptian Pyramids where the treasure is located in the words of the old king.

He arrives in Africa and is robbed by somebody. He feels sorry for himself and lamenting that his life has changed so suddenly and drastically. He recollects the words of the old king and obtains energy. Santiago says to himself. “I promised that I would make my own decisions,” (43) I’m an adventurer, looking for treasure.”(44) Santiago cultivates the discipline and dedication to practice the principles of positive attitude.

IV. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND SELF ESTEEM

These two skills are intertwined with each other. Self-esteem is an emotional evaluation of an individual. It shows about the worth and worthiness of an individual. If any individual likes to be a self-esteemed person he/she has to sustain these interpersonal skills. Communication, listening, understanding and interaction with the other person are called interpersonal skills. Subconsciously these interpersonal skills are developed from the childhood. With a little time and effort one can develop them. Benjamin Franklin says, "When you are good to others, you are best to yourself."(89) The ability to convince and influence with the ideas on the mind of the other person is really a skill. Santiago is not a selfish person but a self-interested and self-esteemed person. This self-interest intensifies him to find his hidden treasure. Self-interest certainly leads to triumph/victory.

Santiago is an exemplified person for his interpersonal skills. He communicates his idea of becoming a shepherd to his parents. They are convinced and bless him. Santiago's father gives a pouch with three ancient Spanish gold coins. He says to his son, "I found these one day in the fields. I wanted them to be a part of your inheritance. But use them to buy your flock".(9)

Santiago understands the words of the old king when he says about his Personal Legend and Soul of the World. The old king charges him to handover one tenth of the sheep he has got to say about the hidden treasure. Santiago brings them to the old king. Here Santiago shows his interpersonal skills.

"Then the old man began to inspect the sheep, and he saw that one was lame. The boy explained that it wasn't important, since that sheep was the most intelligent of the flock, and produced the most wool".(30)

His interaction with Fatima leaves him in the world of pleasure. He loves her at first sight. He proposed the same to her. She convinces with his words. One day she says to him:

"You told me that you loved me. Then, you taught me something of the universal language and the Soul of the World. Because of that, I have become a part of you."..."I have been waiting for you here at this oasis for a long time."(101)

He starts listening to his heart with the inspiration of the alchemist. He learns to communicate with nature. Santiago shows his sorcery of transforming himself into the wind to all the desert people and attracts them.

"The following day, the general bade the boy and the alchemist farewell, and provided them with an escort party to accompany them as far as they chose."(161)

V. MOTIVATION

Motivation comes from a person's belief. Motivation is different from inspiration. Inspiration is only thought where as motivation is action. It inspires and encourages the human beings. It persuades the person into action. It is extremely powerful and it is a driving force to proceed further. People with this motivation become more dynamic, personally and professionally. Motivation comes from a desire to succeed.

Santiago is motivated by five important characters such as Melchizedek, who claims to be the King of Salem, Crystal merchant, who makes him survive in a place, Fatima, whom he loves most, the alchemist, who guides him to connect with the mystical Soul of the World and ultimately the thief, who says about his own dream. Firstly Melchizedek introduces himself to Santiago. He clearly makes him understand that the sheep, merchant's daughter and the fields of Andalusia are only steps to reach his destiny. He inspires him to quest for the treasure, which leads him to meet his Personal Legend. The old king says:

“It’s a force that appears to be negative, but actually shows you how to realize your destiny. It prepares your spirit and your will, because there is one great truth on this planet...And when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.”(22-23)

Secondly crystal merchant brings a change in Santiago’s mind. He is simply Santiago’s foil. Santiago is not inspired by him. But he observes that he is not going to live like this crystal merchant. Though he is not bad, his concepts about his Personal Legend are different. He cannot be able to take a further step in his life. Santiago learns from him that he will not lead his life like an ordinary man but he wants to be something extraordinary.

Thirdly Fatima encourages him to go in search of his treasure. She prompts him that he says about his dreams, about the old king, the omens and his treasure. So she fears nothing, because those omens that brought him to her. She gives him the assurance that she will wait for him till he comes back to her after finding the treasure.

Last but not the least the alchemist stimulates Santiago to meet his destiny of finding the treasure. He says, “Continue in the direction of the Pyramids, and continue to pay heed to the omens. Your heart is still capable of showing you where the treasure is.”(139) Finally, Santiago is motivated by the thief. He says:

“Two years ago, right here on this spot, I had a recurrent dream, too. I dreamed that I should travel to the fields of Spain and look for a ruined church where shepherds and their sheep slept. In my dream, there was a sycamore growing out of the ruins of the sacristy, and I was told that, if I dug at the roots of the sycamore, I would find the sacristy, and I was told that, if I dug at the roots of the sycamore, I would find a hidden treasure. But I’m not so stupid as to cross an entire desert just because of a recurrent dream.”(172)

VI. SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

Subconscious mind is like a magnet as it attracts all things that vibrate with the frequencies of its beliefs. This subconscious mind is the treasure home of previous experiences, faith, belief, skills etc. Santiago rises to the expectations of the alchemist because of his subconscious mind. Santiago meets number of persons in his journey. The more Santiago learns about his human mind the more he will use it to enhance his life. He uses different means to develop his subconscious mind. In the part of it he guesses the things easily and starts listening to his intuition and makes predictions.

The alchemist makes him understand listening to his heart. He says, “Wherever your heart is, that is where you’ll find your treasure.”(135) At a particular juncture in the novel Santiago says to the alchemist about his fear of suffering. But the alchemist says:

“Tell your heart that fear of suffering is worse than the suffering itself. And that no heart has ever suffered when it goes in search of its dreams, because every second of the search is a second’s encounter with God and with eternity.” (136)

VII. SUCCESS

Shiv Khera says to The Hindu, “Positive thinking alone cannot guarantee success. “It is a supplement, not a substitute for your action plan. Your positive action combined with positive thinking results in success.” Santiago’s school, family, the sheep, merchant’s daughter, gypsy woman, the old king, the crystal merchant, Fatima, the alchemist, the chief, the thief -everybody in this novel helps him to reach towards the direction of success. At first he starts his journey in search of treasure but this materialistic journey turns into spiritual journey. Santiago says to himself and thinks about his dream and life in future: “It’s the possibility of having a

dream come true that makes life interesting.”(11) Santiago becomes helpless and hopeless in the novel in many a incident but he doesn't forget his goal which makes him undergo the pains and also the gains. Santiago proves that any dream will come true only with the individual industry. Earl Nightingale says, “Success is the progressive realization of a worthy goal”.

VIII. CONCLUSION

What Shiv Khera says, that Santiago does in his life. Due to this reason, he becomes the outstanding personality in the history of English literature. Not only Santiago, any individual with these theories to follow and practice in their life can be a successful person. ‘A tree is known by its fruit’ is a well know proverb which will be apt for Paulo Coelho and his work *The Alchemist*.

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