



### Virtual Advocacy Day

It's amazing how technology turns ordinary people into powerful voices. Virtual Advocacy Day connects people with lawmakers right from their homes. Through hands-on virtual training, participants learn to advocate on key issues like healthcare or social justice. Participants share stories and concerns with officials, making their voices heard loud and clear. No travel is needed, so, anyone across the country can join and make an impact. This event invites all kinds of voices, patients, activists, researchers, and more. Virtual Advocacy Day shows how digital spaces can spark big, real-world results.

### #ENVIRONMENT

## Grandly Christened the Plastic Odyssey: A Voyage to Clean the Seas

Unlike conventional clean-up efforts that skim plastic from the surface, the Plastic Odyssey dives deeper, tackling the issue at its root. This isn't just a ship, it's a mobile laboratory.



In a world drowning in plastic waste, one vessel dares to rewrite the narrative. Grandly christened the Plastic Odyssey, this ship is more than a means of travel, it is a floating beacon of innovation, hope, and action. Imagine a fisherman on a remote coastline, struggling with plastic-choked waters. Instead of watching helplessly, he learns how to repurpose that waste into usable materials, fuel, building blocks, or even new tools. This is the magic of the Plastic Odyssey, not just cleaning up, but creating long-term solutions that ripple through communities, sparking sustainable change.

### A Vision That Sails Beyond Awareness

Unlike conventional clean-up efforts that skim plastic from the surface, the Plastic Odyssey dives deeper, tackling the issue at its root. This isn't just a ship, it's a mobile laboratory, an idea incubator, and a lifeline for communities drowning in plastic pollution. Rather than collecting waste and moving on, the Plastic Odyssey empowers local populations with practical, small-scale recycling technologies that transform discarded plastic into valuable resources.

### Charting a Course for Transformation

From the vibrant coasts of Africa to the bustling ports of Asia and the remote islands of Latin America, the Plastic Odyssey weaves its way through the planet's most plastic-stricken regions. At each stop, the crew doesn't just talk about change, they ignite it. Engineers, environmentalists, and local entrepreneurs collaborate on real-world recycling solutions, tailored to each region's unique challenges. Picture a hands-on workshop on a sun-drenched shore, where curious eyes watch as discarded plastic bottles are shredded, melted, and molded into something new. It's not just science, it's empowerment. The ship leaves behind more than knowledge; it leaves behind tangible tools, fostering self-sustaining micro-industries that can thrive long after it sails away.

### Turning Plastic Waste into Possibility

The heart of the Plastic Odyssey lies in its ability to transform plastic into power. Onboard, a suite of low-cost, easily replicable recycling machines work their magic, turning plastic debris into usable products. Whether it's crafting sturdy bricks for construction or converting waste into fuel, the ship proves that trash isn't the enemy, it's an untapped resource waiting for reinvention. Beyond technology, the ship carries a powerful message: action is stronger than despair. It engages communities through storytelling, hands-on training, and cultural exchanges that shift perspectives. Instead of seeing plastic as an overwhelming problem, people begin to see it as an opportunity, a catalyst for local economies and environmental restoration.

### More Than a Voyage, A Movement

The Plastic Odyssey is more than a journey across oceans, it's a revolution in the making. It has drawn the attention of global leaders, scientists, and sustainability advocates, all rallying behind the idea that small-scale solutions can drive large-scale impact. With every nautical mile, this grandly christened vessel leaves behind more than just waves, it leaves behind legacies. It is proof that when innovation, collaboration, and purpose sail together, the tide can turn against plastic pollution. The Plastic Odyssey is not just charting waters, it is charting a future where plastic waste is no longer a threat, but a tool for transformation.



Mirza Yawar Baig  
Naturalist and Wildlife Conservationist

I started my entrepreneurial journey in 1983 and set up my consulting company in 1994. A friend asked me if and how the challenges that entrepreneurs in 2025 face are different from those that I faced back then. In my view, all entrepreneurs, irrespective of time, face two critical challenges. Neither has to do with the nature of the business but with being an entrepreneur, irrespective of which business you decide to go into. But they are critical to anticipate, prepare for and resolve satisfactorily if you want to succeed as an entrepreneur. I faced them. I will let you decide if anything has changed since then.

### #WORKING

## You Can Only Have Whatever You Work For

### Dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty

This is the biggest and literally a make-or-break challenge that every entrepreneur faces. Most come unprepared for it. To mentally switch from an assured income every month, no matter how small or large it may be, to 'I am free to earn as much as I want,' generates anxiety and fear, not contentment. Removing the safety net does that to the most expert trapeze artist. Let alone the first-time entrepreneur. Many if not most, are unprepared and this comes as a shock. Ambiguity is certain. That sounds like an oxymoron, but in the case of entrepreneurship, it is completely true. The only thing that you can be sure of is butterflies in the stomach. The solution is to prepare. Mental preparation, even more than material. Entrepreneurship is about emotional maturity. About growing up. About accepting responsibility for yourself, and your destiny. Anxiety is the wrapping of the package. When you say to yourself, 'As much as I want,' what they don't tell you is two things: One, it is not as much as I 'want,' but as much as I 'can do.' It is all about work. 'Wanting' is only the motivator. But it is work and only work that can yield results. The number of hours you spend on your startup is important but even more important is what you do in those hours. Your systems are more important than your expectations. Expectations are free. Systems take discipline, determination and backbreaking effort. But you do it because you believe that it is worth it. Because to make your dream come true is important enough for you.

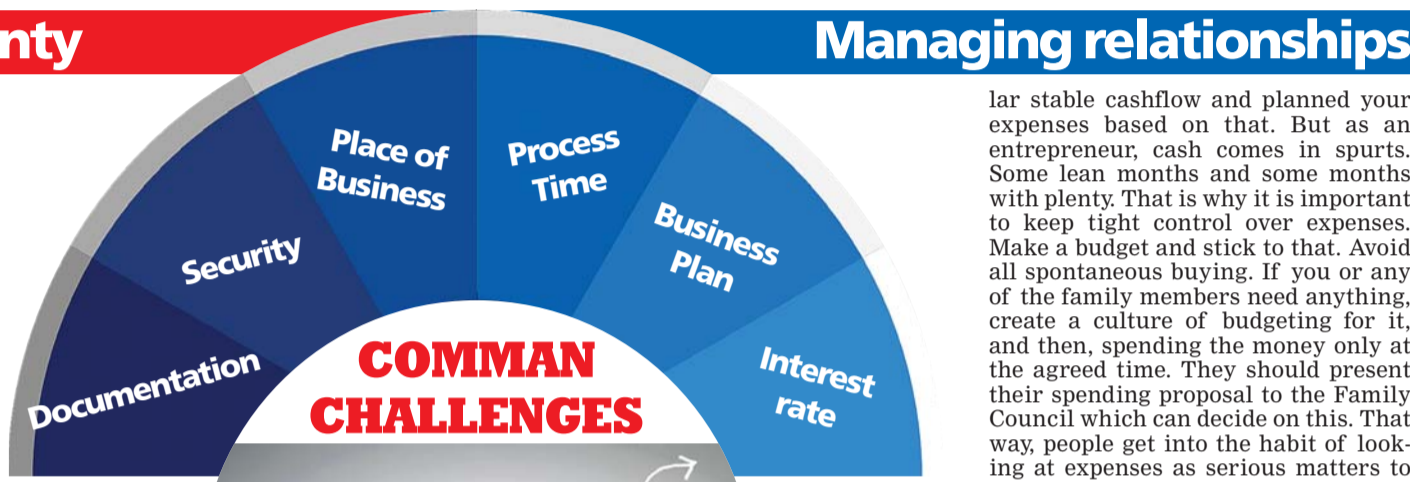
Two, that freedom is another name for owning responsibility. Freedom is not free from consequences of action. It means that you recognize you are responsible for your actions and are consciously accepting that responsibility. We are all responsible for our actions and your responsibility. Freedom is you live in a Parent-Child bubble. You allow yourself to be conditioned to believe that the employer is responsible for your happiness and your role, like that of a child, is to feel sad, glad, bad, mad. When you set out as an entrepreneur, you break out of this fantasy and accept that what happens to you depends on what you do. That is a hugely empowering realization because it means that if you want good things to happen to you, you don't have to wait for

someone on high to grant them, but you can work to make them happen.

If you can deal with that, you cannot fail. If not, you cannot succeed. So, the truth about entrepreneurship is that you can only have whatever you work for. The antidote to sleep is physical exercise. Especially aerobic exercise. Good for health, drives away sleep, depression, anxiety and helps you to think. Any time you need to think deeply about something, go for a long walk. Walking drives blood to the brain using big muscles in the legs and you can think better. Running doesn't do the same thing for thinking. But walking does. If you want to think, leave your ear buds at home. Otherwise, walking can also be used to multitask usefully by listening to something beneficial as you walk. I like to listen to history and start-up podcasts and find them very inspiring. So, all in all, walking is the best medicine. And what's more, at the end of the day, you will sleep like a baby and get more goodness out of four hours than you would out of eight hours after sitting around all day.

The second strategy is to create structure in your thinking and life. Make a timetable. No matter how nebulous. But have a timetable that you stick to. That is the key. To stick to the timetable. Today, many people fall into the App-trap. Download an app and you think it will work for you. Guess what! It won't. You still must work. I find the best 'app' is a simple notepad because as you write in it, your brain activates at a different level than tapping an app. This helps to develop the power of structured thought. First comes the thought, then the plan, then the action. If you want to work effectively, you must learn to think clearly. That means to think in a structured way. Working with a timetable is the best way to do that.

Here is a good way to start. Begin your day with a list of three things that you need to accomplish that day, in order of priority and define metrics for each. What is the minimum you need to accomplish? What does a star performance look like? Remember, this is to motivate you and give meaning to your effort, so, it is very important to start with metrics. Priority is based on the immediate goal on your roadmap. This means that you have a clearly defined,



written down goal, which you have further broken down into short-term goals. If you haven't, first do this because priority is a function of goal clarity. Then, start with the first goal and complete it, then, go to the second goal. Don't start with multiple goals simultaneously. If you are interrupted, return and complete that goal before going to the second goal. At the end of the day, evaluate your day based on the metrics you created for each goal. Make this into a hard-wired habit. Never start a day without a goal and metrics to measure accomplishment. Your life will become purposeful, and satisfaction is guaranteed. This systematic approach is the best antidote for anxiety and depression.

Daily goal measurement gives you direction and metrics give you the satisfaction of achieving the goal. Set tough metrics. Remember that satisfaction is proportionate to the difficulty of the challenge. Set and accomplish difficult tasks if you want to feel highly satisfied. It won't happen with easily achieved goals. Metrics also prevent us from fooling ourselves into thinking about how hard we worked and so on. If you can't measure it, it didn't happen. It doesn't matter how hard you worked. You need to do more or different things the next day. The biggest failure trap is making excuses. Excuses don't change reality. Failure won't change to success because you have a good excuse for it. Excuses only prevent you from learning. Instead of making excuses, ask, 'How did this happen and what can I do to fix it and ensure that it never happens again?' You can achieve great goals, or you can make excuses. But you can't do both. So, decide early which you want to do. Metrics are indispensable for anyone who wants to achieve success. As Mikel Harry, the author of *Sigma Quality standard* famously said, 'If you want to see what someone values, see what they measure. Ask, What do I value?' Measure it.

Structured working and metrics also deal with anxiety and ambiguity because they act like guardrails for run-away imagination. We seem to be pre-programmed to think of worst-case scenarios which is pointless and debilitating. Structure keeps the mind focused on achieving immediate goals and gives meaning to the effort and the satisfaction of achieving it. This is energizing and encouraging.

Make a timetable. No matter how nebulous. But have a timetable that you stick to. That is the key. To stick to the timetable. Today, many people fall into the App-trap. Download an app and you think it will work for you. Guess what! It won't. You still must work. I find the best 'app' is a simple notepad because as you write in it, your brain activates at a different level than tapping an app. This helps to develop the power of structured thought. First comes the thought, then the plan, then the action. If you want to work effectively, you must learn to think clearly. That means to think in a structured way.

### Managing relationships

lar stable cashflow and planned your expenses based on that. But as an entrepreneur, cash comes in spurts. Some lean months and some months with plenty. That is why it is important to keep tight control over expenses. Make a budget and stick to that. Avoid all spontaneous buying. If you or any of the family members need anything, create a culture of budgeting for it, and then, spending the money only on the agreed time. They should present their spending proposal to the Family Council which can decide on this. That way, people get into the habit of looking at expenses as serious matters to be incurred only after due thought.

It is a good way to keep everyone involved in the entrepreneurial journey and keep the focus on success. It helps people see how financial discipline is critical to success and prevents you from being seen as the stick in the mud for everyone. When people make decisions collectively, they take responsibility for them. Budgeting and planned spending also takes care of the anxiety that happens when you and your family realize that there is no paycheck at the end of the week or month. Saving and spending thoughtfully never hurt anyone.

We used to call it VOC (Voice of Customer) in GE and had sessions where customers were invited to come and talk to us about how they experienced the GE product or service that they used. The listeners, GE people, had strict instructions to listen, take notes, and troubleshoot. Not to make explanations or excuses. Just listen and act. When you do this, the customer feels that he is important and his view is valuable. VOC is a very powerful tool to retain customers as well as to make your customers your brand ambassadors.

So, test yourself. Talk to your family. Don't talk down. Speak clearly. You may need to back up and explain some basics first. Or you may need to help them to focus on key financials and not get bogged down in complex spreadsheets. Any time you feel irritated about this, remind yourself that this is your test and your practice because, as I said before, your customers are going to be more like your family than like you. If one way doesn't work, try another and another until

you find the one that clicks. Ask them how you can help them understand and listen to them. They are your teachers. Remind yourself that this time is not wasted at all. It is most valuably spent in improving your ability to sell your ideas in a way that helps customers to see WiIFM (What's in it For Me?). That is the most powerful sales technique for any product or service on the face of the earth. If you can show people what is in it for them, you don't need to sell anything. They will beat a pathway to your door. Proof: Long lines of customers every time Apple announces a new phone. The best way to help customers to see WiIFM (What's in it For Me?) is to ask them what they see as the benefit of the product or service. Not its features, or mechanics. But user benefits. Because if the user can't see or use it, it is not there. Let the user tell you what they want, and then, you provide that.

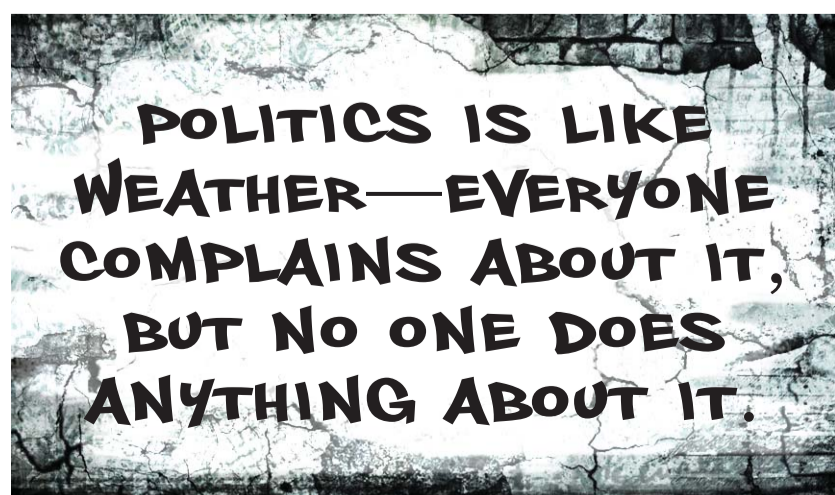
In conclusion, I want to say that entrepreneurship is the logical psychological progression of the individual which marks his/her maturity as an adult, who is willing to take responsibility for themselves and the world around them. Entrepreneurship is the right frame of reference represents all that is good about the human condition, because it reflects not only the drive to do something good for oneself but also for others. Small and medium enterprises are the backbone of local society because their founders invest in the community and are dependent on it.

Small and Medium enterprises fund all kinds of local facilities and needs like schools, religious institutions, charities, healthcare, care for the elderly and so on. They source their needs locally, pay taxes locally and participate in local government. They provide employment to local people and build community. This is very different from huge global businesses, which may be physically present in a place but employ outsiders and source all their requirements from global suppliers, because they get better prices for bulk purchases. They participate minimally in local society, if at all.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



### THE WALL

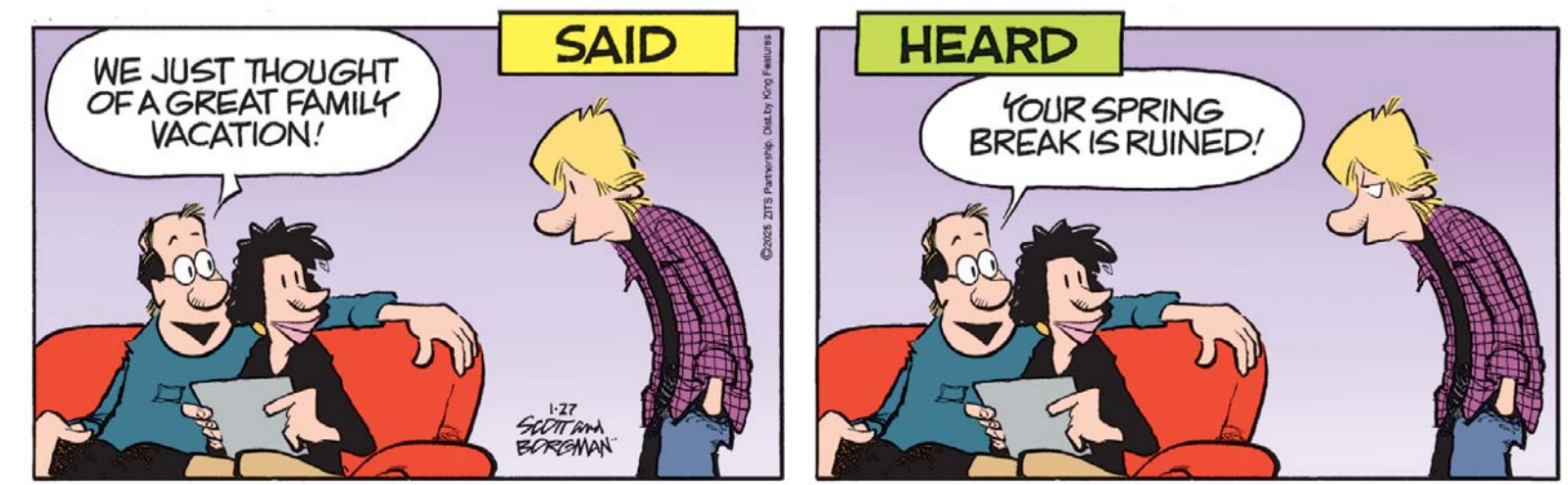


### BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

### ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman