

HALFWAY

THE AUTHENTIC JOURNEY STARTS WITHIN

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My first four decades were like being on *'non-stop rocket expeditions'* without any chance of successful landing and finding the way of living my heart craved. Time and again, the magic of my latest lifestyle vanished, and I found that I needed to start a new journey. Time and again, recovering energy and identifying the new destination got harder. A warning instinct alerted me that, one day, my internal engines would lose power and fail. To make my life worth living, I needed to find a significant purpose and make a positive contribution to the world without moral cost or compromise. Finally, I realized that I could only risk one or two more *'launches'*. I needed to put an end to the growing sense of paralysis that made me fearful of taking another wrong decision and failing again. There was no room for mistakes.

My life had been blessed by three significant falls where I felt the caress of death. The first, an emotional fall, a heartbreak. The second, a loss of faith and addiction, and the third, a business failure. After my third fall, I had a clear vision. I understood that if I were ever to get up again, I needed to make a significant change in my life's orbit. I couldn't afford a fourth fall.

There is a Buddhist proverb, "When the student is ready, the master appears". Luckily, the master appeared to me in the fourth decade of my life. This is why I call my book *Halfway*.

The essence of this book can be summarized in this simple and wise quote which will guide me for the rest of my life, my second *Halfway*:

"Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes", Carl Jung.

Infinitely grateful,

Hani Hajar

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I. WARMING UP I'm special

Since my early childhood I have felt a natural inner belief, a sense of being special and blessed with unique talents and a divine spark. Privileged, protected by a guardian angel, shielded and fortified by the whispering sounds of my parent's nightly prayers.

Nothing seemed impossible. The only limit, my own imagination. Like every kid, I was a genius in a pure state, an uncut diamond, a bohemian dreamer without any barriers of doubt, fear, regrets, resentment, religion, race, sex, social status or appearance.

Ignorant of time passing, I journeyed through childhood, adolescence and on to adulthood. I was hypnotized by the urge for social success. I should have listened to my inner voice urging me towards self-acceptance and inner peace. Instead, I scattered precious gifts and wasted magical resources along the way.

End of beginner's good run

After passing from childhood to adolescence, I became aware of three alarming thoughts. Firstly, 'what if this lucky spell of being 'special' has an expiry date?'. Secondly, 'what will happen to my protective shield when my parents are no longer here, and the whispers of their prayers disappear forever with them?'. Finally, I wondered if the divine touch that I felt came to everyone? I sensed the possibility of real unfairness. I was afraid and worried about how this might impede my inner harmony and connection with whatever lies beyond. These thoughts weighed heavily on me over many years and dissipated much of my childhood sense of being special.

We are special

It took me several decades to understand that it was not only me and a chosen few who were blessed with a divine touch. Now I understand and believe that every human being receives a handful of talents and a spark of divinity at birth. It takes common sense and faith to accept that we belong to something higher than ourselves. We are a part of the universe and each of us holds within a dust particle of its magic. If the universe can expand, then that particle within us can also expand and grow.

Once I understood that ‘We are all special’, my heart felt at peace. I could leave my fear of injustice behind.

At the same time, I learned of and accepted the fact that life is not fair, and I can’t do anything about it. The only thing I can change whenever such injustice comes to me, is the way I respond to it. My attitude. Only for that am I responsible.

My mission

Once I closed the door on my doubts and my fears, I recovered the forgotten childhood sense of my natural born genius, talents and unlimited potential. A new door opened with a sign saying, “Now I am aware of my own greatness, I have the responsibility to deliver this excellence to the whole world”. This imaginary sign freaked me out. In moments of weakness, I wished that I had never come so far on my journey of self-discovery. My life was better when I was hypnotized by mediocrity, where I would never have to face such a decision and carry the huge weight of responsibility.

Now, there was no way back. I opened the door and faced two options. Walk through that door and follow my true life mission or close it and retreat back to my old self. The choice and responsibility were mine alone.

Singing not murmuring

Now I have reached my fourth decade, my Halfway, I constantly think about and draft and redraft a one page statement, expressing the significance of my life. I now aim, that by my last day, I would have achieved the best possible version of myself, surpassing all my limitations. There would never be a better version of myself than on that day. On my last day, I would die with a smile on my face knowing that throughout my life I sang out loud my own inner song and did not hold onto any murmuring melodies of frustration.

Gratitude

My first thanks go to you. Without you, I could never have achieved this inner journey. You have helped me to continue when I was tempted to give up. The idea of a possible positive impact, however small, of a phrase or a life lesson that could inspire or motivate you, was what filled me with infinite energy to continue writing the best I could. Thank you in advance

and with all my heart for your time and willingness to share my experience. I hope this story will serve as an inspiration for you to start or to continue on the wonderful path of self-discovery and personal growth.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Secondly, thanks to all those inspiring people who crossed my path. Thank you, in advance, to those who will inspire me as I go through life. Thanks to those who have not inspired me, even those who have hurt me. They are also part of the duality of my life.

A special thanks to my musketeers, the main mentors on my journey towards self-discovery: Robin Sharma, Darren Hardy, Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, and Jim Rohn.

The debt I owe to these teachers I am paying back through my personal commitment to the dissemination of the teachings that they, unknowingly, have given me. This book is the first step towards my personal legacy.

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