

Excuse me, I'm climbing the mountain

Excellence is not an act, but a habit' is a quote that sits comfortably with Ryan Gomez, and to listen to, and watch him inspire and enthrall an audience with his personal and heartwarming story, is to be in the presence of a master story teller. You instinctively know that here is a man, who has suffered the rigours of immigration, stumbled on the rocks of misfortune, lifted himself above his humble beginnings, and overcome the many trials and tribulations which would devastate, a lesser man.



A philosopher, and platform speaker, Ryan Gomez firmly believes *"It's not the circumstance that defines the person you become but rather the choices you make"*.

"Excuse me I am climbing my mountain" is his story and he relates it with passion, eloquence and the experience of a lived tale. Here is man who left his homeland to seek fame and fortune, and found it in the toughest arena of them all.

At 35 Ryan Gomez has established his niche and is on the cusp of the greatness he dreamed about and worked so hard to get. He is a Cranbourne toastmaster with excellent credentials who has contested and won the right to represent Bass Division in the International Speech Contest in Perth in May 2011. The hopes and aspirations of us all go with him to Perth, where he will have the opportunity to make his indelible mark and catapult himself to the biggest contest of them all in America, and where, with luck and good fortune he will become the World champion of public speaking.

It all began in Gadag, India

Ryan Gomez was born to Anglo-Indian parents in humble circumstances in Gadag, a small village in India, where the British established a railway system and rail junction. His father struggled while his mother worked hard to provide for the family. Proud parents, they wanted the best for their children and as dad had attended boarding school, they both determined that Ryan, the first born son, should get a good education away from Gadag village. An Anglo-Indian school was selected and Ryan was shunted off first to St. Bede's and then to Don Bosco catholic schools provided by the British who were benevolent to Anglo-Indian families.

Dad, a stern and disciplined man, tried to do the right thing, and so Ryan was sent off to boarding school at the tender age of six and stayed there until aged 12. Ryan reflects here that it was a very lonely and fearful time, and he spent only three weeks per year with his family.

Going home was the happiest time, but going back to boarding school filled him with dread. Ryan's face contorts to show the horror of it all as he reflects on this time, and then, breaking into a broad smile he describes the later years of high school, dropping out of college, Swissair where he rose to become the Senior Sales Executive at the tender age of 19, and meeting and being sponsored for migration to Australia, by his beautiful future wife Charmaine.

Ryan's story is inspirational, and transports the reader from his humble beginnings in a small Indian village to the sprawling metropolis of Melbourne, Australia. This is the story of determination, boyhood dreams and ultimate success of a speaking superstar. Read on...

Gadag village is humanity personified

HUBLI: People of Chikkahandigol of Gadag district have been giving shelter and taking the responsibility of two children after their parents died a few days ago. This is a heart-rending story of a family which came to this village in search of work from Betagere, a neighbouring town. Hanumantappa Raval, a daily wage employee, had come to Chikkahandigol to work as a mason along with his wife Ratnavva and two children. The family was staying in a small shed while he worked as masons and agricultural labourers. After some years, Hanumantappa developed health problems and confined to bed, and this prompted his wife to work as mason.

Hanumantappa died of prolonged illness on April 28, at a government hospital. On hearing the news of Hanumantappa's death, his wife Ratnavva too died of heart attack, leaving their children orphaned.

(Basavaraj F Kattimani, May 2, 2011)

Dreams of faraway places

Ryan Gomez always dreamed as a child of going to Australia; He had relatives there, and they had described to him a lifestyle he could only ever dream about. With not much of a higher education and as a College dropout- first year of Business commerce- he went off at 17 to earn enough money to follow his dreams, in a job he was passionate about-the airlines-and got his first position in Swiss air, more by good luck than merit.

Here he first tasted worker discrimination and workplace bullying, by being regularly criticized by other employees for not having much of an education to get in to such an exalted position. Being determined however, to make his mark in the airlines business, Ryan put in the extra effort and studied, learned and excelled his way up, and at the age of 19 became the senior sales Executive for Swiss air which was his first substantial achievement.

More discrimination was to follow, for Ryan entered Australia and saw first-hand the intolerance of some, for anyone who wasn't from this great land girt by sea.

Being self aware and confident of his abilities added that extra dimension for Ryan, who tolerated the indifference, and focused his mind on his dreams, holding firmly to a philosophy that to conceive and believe was to achieve the dream.

"We all have a need to create or rather express the most fundament of human needs which is to raise ourselves to help mankind", is one of many quotes Ryan expresses as we speak.

"To be among others who seek education, business opportunity and a path out of mediocrity' He says, and the listener is glued to this philosopher's tale".

"Work, education and understanding are the keys to develop ourselves and serve others", "Yes! Ryan keep them coming, I think to myself".

These are not just glib words or clichés, but the manifestations of a passionate and determined human being, who overcame humble beginnings, sad and lonely boarding schooldays, dropping out from University, separation from family, and vocational bullying, and in spite of it all, rose above and forged his own pathway to happiness in a new and prosperous land.

Now, aged 35 and a happily married family man with beautiful children; Ryan-who was sponsored to Australia by his wife who he met through his job in Swissair-lives in a leafy suburb of Melbourne; is an entrepreneur, motivational speaker, trainer and platform speaker. Not for him the humble life he had known growing up, but a new life where hard work, persistence and goal setting have given him the knowledge and skills, to keep striving and ensure personal fulfillment.

He has started and failed in business twice. He has lived on the edge of financial ruin. He has worked three jobs and clawed his way back. He has never given up. He looks forward not back, and sees all past experience as stepping stones to success. Where many would have given up, Ryan Gomez strode confidently towards his dreams and with the fire of belief in his belly and love in his heart, he has come through. He has set his goals, and means to achieve them.

Ryan has a philosophy uncommon in many and speaks from the heart when he tells of his journey.

"With the diverse cultures we have, learning & adapting to the different cultures is challenging, but where would we get the experience and the expertise to do all this, if it wasn't in a country like Australia."

Ryan says "The most challenging thing is not slipping back into the comfort zone. There is no comfort zone in a 2nd or 3rd world country. Australia can turn our dreams in to reality if we use the opportunities and work hard to realise them."

Ryan's 5 Year Plan and Goals

Ryan firmly believes:

If I can achieve anything, and know I cannot fail, these are the things I will do?

- I must raise myself to help mankind
- “I will live my dreams, follow and galvanise my passions, and touch and help as many people as possible create and awaken the ‘Artist’ in themselves to pursue their own dreams”.
- I will start my own charity to help the poorest kids in Africa and India.
- I will move from success to significance.
- I will be creative & put myself on the line if I truly believe I can achieve something.

These are no mean pithy words, for it is obvious that I-the writer-am in the presence of an extraordinary and insightful human being who has conquered adversity to become a role model living his dreams and achieving so much in such a short time. A man who is confident in his own ability and is determined to succeed.

In May, 2011, at Perth, WA, Ryan is a contestant in the District 73 International Speech Contest which leads to winning the World Championship of Public Speaking.

Heroes

If Ryan achieves his goal of becoming, World Champion of Public Speaking he will be grateful to many of his heroes, and particularly to:

Shiv Kera Indian speaker and author of You Can Win

29th April 2011, Mumbai: A beautiful evening in New York mirrored the excitement resonating around the first ever Remit2India ‘The Light of India Awards’ 2011 held on 22nd April. The awards were constituted by Remit2India, ranked the world’s #1 online money transfer portal for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) by AC Nielsen, to recognize exemplary achievements by NRIs in the fields of business leadership, corporate leadership, political leadership, science and technology, journalism and literature and arts and entertainment.

*Winners were announced in 6 categories ranging from corporate excellence to arts & entertainment. The esteemed Jury comprising of names like Sulaja Firodia Motwani, Javed Akhtar, Priya Paul, Prasoon Joshi, **Shiv Khera**, Mahesh Dattani, Shabana Azmi, Pranay Gupte and Madhu Trehan chose their winners from each category. In accordance with the Jury Awards, NRIs and Indians across the world voted online to choose their ‘Light of India’ People’s Choice Awards.*

Les Brown – motivational speaker

Most people have the ability to be wealthy, says the 66-year-old motivational speaker, but his prosperity message is not for everyone.

Les Brown believes there are three reasons why people fail: “One, they don’t know what they have going for them; two, they don’t know how to make money with their natural gifts and talents; and, three, they don’t know how to reach people to pay for those talents.”

“Greatness is a choice,” he says. “It’s not your destiny.”

Ryan Gomez gives to you his final message.

“Ultimately it’s not Success that we should strive for but Significance”.

Accept this message graciously and believe in it.

Writers Note: We humans are blessed sometimes, for on our journey through life we meet messengers who offer gifts of beauty, love, peace and service. Pay attention to these messengers for they are your friends, and hope one day to meet Ryan Gomez. Your thinking will be changed, and you’ll be glad that you and he crossed paths.