



# 9

## Leading with a GAIN Focus

### Contents

Leading with a GAIN Perspective.....	114
Avoid the LOSE Mindset.....	121
GAIN and AI.....	126
Chapter Highlights.....	129

**Abstract** This chapter applies the GAIN concept in a leadership context. It considers some best practice ideas, and then alerts us about mental stances that can inhibit the practice of GAIN, some of which are, Lamenting, Obsessing, Scathing, Envyng (LOSE). Each of these behaviors is reviewed in light of their disparaging effects on your advancement and overall psyche.

### The Dark Path Called Envy: A Story

Sasha and Jenny worked together at a PR firm. Life was good and the ladies were doing well in their field. There was one major difference between them, though: Sasha would always try to learn from the advancement of others, while Jenny was plagued by a bitter sense of envy.

Even within the context of their lives—Sasha was always happy when Jenny or her loved ones accomplished something, using it as a stimulus to find out how she could improve her own life given her specific qualities. Jenny, on the other hand, had a hard time hiding her envy whenever Sasha or her family had a windfall, and this ultimately brought a rift between the two colleagues.

Sasha moved on, reinventing herself multiple times, and making some impressive professional strides along the way. Jenny made some small advancements, but never got rid of her bitterness, and continued to suffer on her dark path of envy until she retired.

---

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.<sup>1</sup>

~Jim Elliot

## Leading with a GAIN Perspective

Regardless what leadership style you aspire, whether this would be transformational, transactional, spiritual, servant, awakened, autocratic, authentic, or a combination of some, the GAIN concept can make an important difference in the way you treat yourself and those you interact with.

First and foremost, I want you to know that leadership doesn't have to entail a position in a formal organization. I firmly believe that you can only be a good leader to others if you are a good leader to yourself. I also believe that people gravitate to the individuals they see as good self-leaders. Self-leadership is therefore a critical pathway toward a formal leadership position in case you aspire that.

In being a good self-leader, you need to be able to lead well and follow well simultaneously. You need to be able to perceive matters from a rational standpoint, and then work on your mental and emotional balance to follow the path you determined. This doesn't mean that you should not adjust when unforeseen issues arise—and they will—but as much as possible, you should keep yourself in balance. Stability works best toward your own peace of mind, and toward the peace of mind of those who surround you.

Another alert to share here is the fact that “self” is a questionable subject. We all have egos. Some bigger than we would like them to be. To keep the ego within decent proportions, it is healthy to remember Thich Nhat Hanh's notion of interbeing, and the general Buddhist psychological stance of dependent arising: everything is interconnected, and you would not be where you are today without the blood, sweat and tears of so many people and other beings you know and will never know. For that purpose alone, it may be good when you have your cereal or a sandwich in the morning to consider how

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/jim\\_elliot\\_189244?src=t\\_gain](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/jim_elliot_189244?src=t_gain)

much effort went into getting everything you are currently having for your nourishment, the box of cereals, the milk, the raisin, the toast, the cheese, and more, in front of you. And there it is: you cannot think about the thousands, maybe millions of human and other beings that worked on making it all possible without feeling humble and grateful. That's a great mindset to start the day and place your "self" in perspective.

When you start your day, as a student, a gardener, a vice-president, a homemaker, a retire person, or in any other position, take a moment to observe yourself in the mirror, smile at the person you see, and wish them a great day. You may also put in a good wish for those you feel particularly close to, such as your children, parents, partner, pets, siblings, friends, neighbors, colleagues, you name it.

This combination of things to consider will enhance your sense of gratitude even before you face anything the outside world has in store for you. Sending good thoughts in the world is a wonderful thing to do, and if you believe in the power of thoughts, you can see how you are already contributing toward making the world a better place. The thoughts of being interconnected to everything else, and the gratitude that you are here now is a powerful way of implementing the GAIN mindset.

*Creating Educational Success Pathways for Students: Anayet Chowdhury*

Perusing Forbes' 2023 30-under-30 list, I came across a brief description of a young man who made a difference for many young people over the past 9 years. Anayet Chowdhury is the son of Bangladeshi immigrants. He cofounded ArgoPrep, an EdTech publisher specializing in K-8th grade supplemental resources. He did this in 2015 with only \$60. At the time of writing this chapter, more than 1 million students and educators have used ArgoPrep materials, which include video lectures, quizzes, and printable worksheets, to boost K-8 test scores in various subjects including math, science and social studies.<sup>2</sup>

ArgoPrep has won many awards over the past years; a sign that its customers—students and teachers—think it works well. According to the ArgoPrep website, a high percentage of parents have confirmed that this e-learning platform is significantly helping their child improve their skills.

The surprising news about Chowdhury is that he initially set out to go to Med School, and was doing his Bachelor's in molecular biology, a passion that he has not relinquished. The MIT educational studies program describes Anayet as an author, entrepreneurial thinker, and educator who has helped thousands of students gain acceptance into top colleges and high schools. His passion is obviously geared in two directions: a love for teaching, and conducting cancer

---

<sup>2</sup>Anayet Chowdhury (2023). Forbes 30 under 30: Education. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/profile/anayet-chowdhury/?sh=3d0027f72e13>

research at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Mr. Chowdhury's cancer project has been awarded multiple gold-medal awards and he even had the opportunity to present his research to President Obama.<sup>3</sup>

On his LinkedIn webpage, Chowdhury expresses his gratitude for making it to the Forbes 30 under 30 list for 2023. He looks back at his life thus far and shares his youth experiences growing up in a 298-square-foot apartment with a family of four, living extremely frugally, because there was no money for any kind of splurging. His mom cut his hair until he was 18, because she could not afford the \$10 for a haircut. The family had no cable television or high-speed internet. Yet, there was support, and there was motivation.

Chowdhury continues his story explaining how he and a group of friends, while he was doing his undergrad in molecular biology, founded Argoprep with \$60, only to see it mushrooming to a gigantic project that thus far sold more than \$13 million dollars in workbooks. A good part of this money has been invested in the learning platform.

Of course the path was not a bed of roses. There have been failures, and Chowdhury is sober enough to realize that there will be more of those along the way. He honestly shares that entrepreneurship is a rewarding endeavor, but not an easy one. The greatest reward lies in doing something fulfilling that also benefits others.<sup>4</sup>

The reason for profiling Anayet Chowdhury above is because he is a great example of conducting self-leadership through the GAIN model: he *generated* his experiences growing up in a very modest household, getting an opportunity to go to college, and falling in love with education. This *appreciation* process, which was an evaluation of what he truly liked in life, undoubtedly led to a process of *internalizing*, through which he realized that he had to do something to help young members of society succeed in attaining higher education, just like he did. The *newness* that came from this process was his entrepreneurial effort of co-founding and operating ArgoPrep: a fulfilling resource for millions of people who will become all they can be.

### Retrospect

The old up and down  
Sometimes brings me a frown  
Today, everything seems great

---

<sup>3</sup> Anayet Chowdhury, *Entrepreneur & Educator* (2023). *ESP Biography*. Retrieved from <https://esp.mit.edu/teach/teachers/anayetc/bio.html>

<sup>4</sup> Anayet Chowdhury: *CEO & Co-Founder at ArgoPrep* (2024) *LinkedIn*. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/in/anayet-chowdhury-762b7195/>

Tomorrow brings a twist of fate  
It's an ever-swinging carrousel  
That, by now, I should know well  
Yet, life remains a big surprise  
And maybe that's its very spice

We find ourselves moving from boom  
To insecure and pitch-black doom  
What keeps us hanging on this slope  
Is our steady, incorrigible hope  
That, even though today we whine  
Tomorrow again the sun will shine  
And what today may seem like night  
Will transform into promising light

People come and people go  
Today a friend, tomorrow foe  
Positions, minds and visions change  
What's normal now, was once so strange  
The person that I am today  
Doesn't resemble the old me in any way  
So, on I bounce, between joy and sorrow  
Here today, and gone tomorrow

*-Joan Marques*

## Practicing GAIN in Daily Life

Once the interactions with others start, things can get a bit more complicated. We get to deal with people and situations we may not be overly fond of. All the well-wishes in the world cannot change that. But do consider, that everything and everyone that lives, wants to be happy and be alive. Admitted, some get so desperate that they want to give it all up, but that is usually the result of tremendous stress, setbacks, rejection, and other instances of suffering.

Remember the four noble truths discussed in Chap. 8? They are always there. Suffering exists, and it has a cause, because either want something we cannot get (desire) or want to get rid of something that sticks with us (aversion).

You will encounter people who don't like you, just because you exist. No kind act from your side will make them change their mind. I wrote about that earlier in this book as well (see Chap. 3), where I encountered a woman who

was reasonably nice to me until I got a job she felt I did not deserve. From then on, she ignored me in a way I considered painful, until I learned that I was making this woman’s attitude more important to my performance and wellbeing than it should be.

Just like I did at that time, you also have the ability to decide our attitude. That, too, has been a statement made multiple times in this book. And it’s a profound leadership strategy. You cannot prevent what happens, but you can decide how you will look at it, and what you will do about it. Sometimes it will take time to find the strength and mindset to look at a situation positively, and sometimes you may have to revert to one of the ten ways I suggested in Chap. 8, starting with meditation, and ending with membership in a contemplative circle. Better even, you can think of the Noble Eightfold Path, and practice the eight right actions and mindsets that will release negative internal tendencies and bring positive ones to the surface.

In all honesty, life is full of disruptions, and the challenges we have to face in the “generating,” “Appreciating” and Internalizing” stages are sometimes so unexpected and mindboggling that we will need time to center before even beginning to perceive these challenges as part of the gains in our life. A good piece of advice: don’t blame yourself, or at least, not too long (Fig. 9.1).

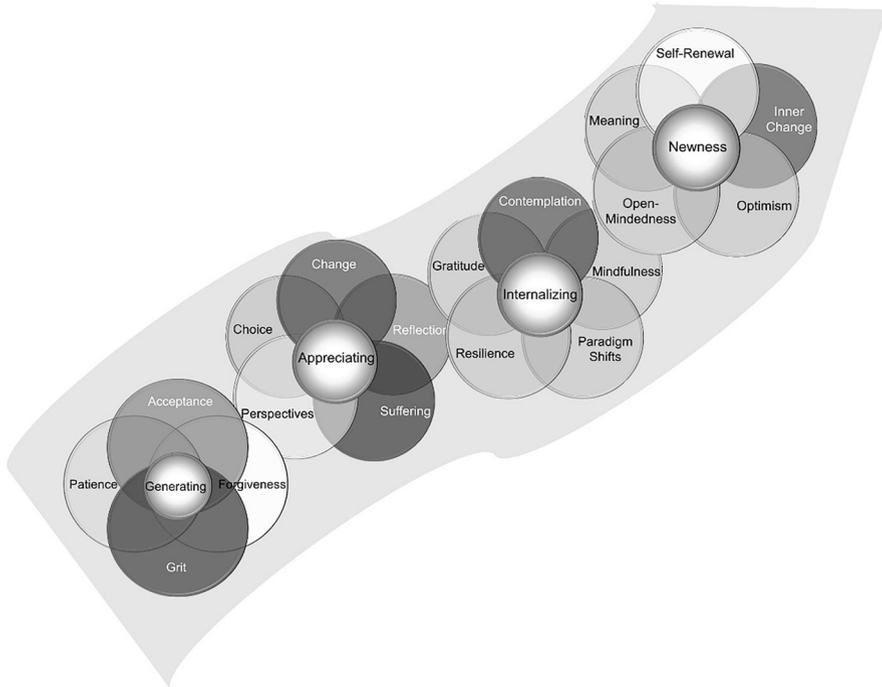


Fig. 9.1 The GAIN Process

*A while ago, I found myself in a situation that filled me with despair for some time. The place I had considered as my safe haven until retirement; where I had given my all for many years, and which I took so much pride in, was going through a transition with another entity. All of a sudden, my future was on the line. And while the rational part of my mind reasoned that changes are the only constant, that there will be a window opening for every door that closes, and that I just had to be patient to see how this would play out, the other part was engaging in self-blame and blame to others: I was kicking myself for always making the wrong decisions (why did I ever choose this place?), and others for not safeguarding the future of this place properly. All that, while there had been many good years, and while I am well aware that the current situation was a consequence of a series of factors and influences outside of our control.*

*I realized that this experience was yet another teacher in my life, and that there was a lesson to be learned. Maybe the lesson was that I could not control everything, and that I just needed to trust in the goodness of the universe. I decided to meditate and internalize what I had known all along: that, like my breath, everything arises and passes. This status quo that was about to change, had been in place for a long time, and needed to change, even though I, and with me many others, did not want that.*

*Looking back at the situation, I can only say that this event was a good, and actually past-due, “wake-up call” to prepare for newness. I realized that, while I had been complaining about the routine of my activities and the downward spiral of progress in many ways, I had refused to engage in the reinvention that had entered my mind multiple times. Based on this event, I got myself into gear, blew life into an organization I had founded but not operated over the previous four years, and took to social media to share my insights with the world. I started shifting the “challenge” into an “opportunity” by bringing together all my skills and finding the most beneficial way to merge them. The reinvention process is still ongoing, but I have now acquired a sense of gratitude for not falling prey to the sleepwalk mindset I often warn others for. Oh, how easy is it to become a sleepwalker: we nestle ourselves in a routine, and practice it day in day out, year in year out, without investing the energy to question what we should do to elevate the level of satisfaction and happiness in our life.*

*Thanks to this unexpected turn of events, I was basically forced to apply GAIN:*

- I **generated** the experience of losing the relative comfort I had gotten accustomed to,
- I reviewed it, initially with a sense of horror, but gradually with **appreciation** for the opportunity it created,
- I **internalized** the options I had and discovered the many ways in which I could reconstruct my livelihood in a way that would grant me so much more fulfillment and happiness, and
- I am now embarking on the **newness** that I have cultivated through the process.

## Point to Ponder

Consider a situation you are currently dealing with or have recently dealt with.

Evaluate this situation with the elements of GAIN.

Where do you feel there may be a bottleneck? How do you plan to overcome it?

**Mind, body, and ...?**

Moving from present to future  
 And oftentimes also to the past  
 Able to imagine alternatives  
 To situations that didn't last  
 Rarely dwelling too long anywhere  
 Shifting, now slow, then fast  
 An avid traveler at its core  
 Here calm, but there with a blast

Like a disloyal partner it moves  
 Away from the body and back  
 In directions hard to predict  
 Ever flowing, alert – rarely slack  
 Conjuring mesmerizing thoughts  
 Colorful, bright, or pitch-black  
 Harder to pin down as you try  
 And not easy to keep on track

Captured in my head but not caught  
 The fountain of many a thought  
 Not even slowing down during sleep  
 Crossing continents in a swift leap  
 And if someday it stays away  
 This body might be led astray  
 And then will come the day I die  
 But then I wonder: who am I?

*~ Joan Marques*

## Avoid the LOSE Mindset

There is an opposite to the GAIN approach, that I feel I should alert you for, as it is all too easy to fall prey to it if you don't keep your head together. Since I used an acronym to explain the fulfilling approach to life, I will also use an acronym to present the things you want to avoid. That acronym is LOSE, and here's what it stands for:

### Lamenting

While you may find yourself lamenting when you encounter a traumatic event, it is important to keep in mind that this should not become a new and lasting state of existing. We all deserve to mourn our losses, and some losses are more painful than others. But there comes a time that you have to get yourself up and move on. Don't think that moving on is unfair or shallow. I have considered that when I lost my dearest pet-friend Bella in 2019. I thought I should never get another pet, because moving on without Bella was a sub-standard way of living, and it was unfair to Bella, who could not be part of this life anymore.

Fortunately, I meditated on this for a while, and even though there were still tears in the years thereafter, I also learned that getting another pet, especially a rescue who did not have a fun life to start with, was a compassionate thing to do. I even realized that if Bella could communicate with me, she would let me know that I should pay the goodness forward by giving another pet a chance on a protected and cheerful lifestyle. This is how I welcomed Molly in my life, and no, she is not Bella, but she is her own precious, adorable self, who brought some light in our life again, while we were blessed to do the same for her.

Lamenting too long is not just a bad thing for your mind, it can also make you physically ill, and it will affect your relationships with others and your outlook on life. So, keep it limited, and work deliberately on converting it to a sense of gratitude about what was, and anticipation on what it to come.

In an interesting article from the Cleveland Clinic, two psychologists, Dr. Scott Bea and Dr. Susan Albers, share some great ideas on how to stop lamenting.

1. *Step back.* The issue you currently deal with is just a small part of your life. Look at it that way. It will pass.
2. *Look within.* Journal the issue that bothers you and include the reasons why you think it is such a problem in your opinion. You may obtain a deeper understanding on what is really at the root and how to address it.
3. *Make a game of it.* If you caught yourself lamenting a lot, you can adopt an exercise. Dr. Bea suggests wearing a bracelet or rubber band and change it to the other hand every time you complain. Try to keep the bracelet or rubber band on one arm for a month.
4. *Choose a proper outlet.* Don't share your concerns on social media. Keep it private and be critical in selecting your sounding board, recommends Dr. Albers.
5. *Voice sensible concerns.* Consider what you say. If you're going to complain do so by also suggesting a solution and the reason why that should be. This comes across as more mature and sensible than just uttering criticism.
6. *Identify the good parts and mention them.* Make sure your complaint begins and ends on a positive note, so that you don't leave the one(s) on the receiving end with a bad feeling.
7. *Express gratitude.* This is a recurring subject in the suggestion lists presented in this book. That makes sense, because you get so much further with expressing gratitude. If you can make gratitude the habit rather than lamenting, and if you can write between one and three reasons why you are grateful every day, the entire quality of your life will undergo a turn for the better.<sup>5</sup>

## Obsessing

Obsessions can sneak up on you before you know it. When you want something very much and you cannot get it, it can become an obsession. Similarly, when you want to get rid of something and you cannot, it can become an obsession. Obsessing is a dangerous state of mind, as it is irrational, and can lead to irrational acts. A friend of mine went through an ugly divorce, and after trying to mend things several times, his wife decided that it was really over. The couple had two children, which my friend was very fond of, and the fact that he could not see his children daily anymore ate at him. He started stalking his ex-wife and the children, and threatening them in the most obscene way. His mental imbalance became so bad that he ultimately did some major damage to the home of his ex-wife and kids, leading him to be arrested and jailed for three months. Three long months, in which he lost his job, and one of his precious dogs, since he now had to count on others to look after everything.

---

<sup>5</sup>Cleveland Clinic (29 Aug 2018). How to Stop Complaining: 7 Secrets to Being Happier. *Health Essentials*. Retrieved from <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/how-to-stop-complaining-7-secrets-to-being-happier>

It took my friend a long time to overcome his obsession. His ex-wife had to get a restraining order, which did not make things more bearable. Over the course of the next three years, he finally calmed down, and the former couple developed a reasonable, mature communication bond, with mutual respect and clear boundaries on both sides.

Obsessing happens, and it is never good, as it robs you from your rational senses, and can transform you into a pitiful being, feared by others, and not very likeable, least of all to yourself. If, therefore, you feel as if you are obsessing over something, seek help. Talk to a mentor or a therapist, or, if you can muster the strength, meditate in order to gain the insight that you are not doing yourself a favor with this attitude.

In a brief article in *Psychology Today*, Dr. Seth Meyers suggests a few simple steps to disrupt obsessive thoughts and help guide your mind in a different direction. He recommends starting by acknowledging that you are upset about something. Then, ask yourself the following questions:

- If I had to guess, what is the exact temperature now here?
- What is my body temperature like now? Do I feel a little cold, a little warm, or perfectly comfortable?
- If I don't make any noise, can I identify every single sound that I hear?
- Outside, what is in the sky? Are there clouds? How would I describe what I see in the sky?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how hungry am I?
- If I could choose to eat any dish right, what would I choose?

The exercise above serves as a distraction to your mind from the upsetting thoughts in which you were stuck. Dr. Meyers alerts us that the above questions could be expanded or replaced by other simple, neutralizing questions, as long as they level your mindset and distract you from the upsetting thoughts.<sup>6</sup>

## Scathing

Some people have the pitiful habit to engage in scathing when things don't turn out the way they had hoped. Scathing is mean. It negatively affects your mind, and it alienates others from you. Unfortunately, some people have made scathing their second nature. They seem to be in the habit of deriding others, and I suspect that they do that in a desperate effort to make them feel better about themselves. You may have heard the saying, "Misery loves

---

<sup>6</sup>Meyers, S. (Dec. 82,016). Stop Obsessing or Fixating With a Fast Cognitive Technique. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/insight-is-2020/201612/stop-obsessing-or-fixating-fast-cognitive-technique>

company”? People who mock others are most likely miserable. They have a deep-rooted unhappiness inside that they can only temporarily silence by making others miserable as well.

I knew a man who would always point out anything that was less perfect in others. He was making deriding comments to his overweight daughter, mocked his wife regularly about the way she dressed, insulted his son in front of his friends at every opportunity he had, and thought he was funny when he made fun of others. Unfortunately, this man never changed, even though he is a senior citizen today. Life handed him several warning signs, and every time it seemed as if he would change for the better, only to fall into the same scathing pattern as soon as he recovered. The sad part of the story is that this man was probably miserable inside, and with that, he left no chance unused to make others miserable as well. Don't be like this person.

If you are the one who engages in making scathing remarks to others whenever you feel displeased, or if you engage in any other bad habit, try the following set of actions to keep yourself in control:

1. *Make It Conscious*: Figure out why you do what you do. If you can find out when you do it, you are getting close to the reason, and you may succeed in putting a stop to the act.
2. *Write it down*: Describe your act, but also what caused it, how you felt, and what went through your head. If you feel that your habit brings you some satisfaction, write that down as well. If you do this for one or two weeks, then read back, you may be able to see a pattern and decide on a behavioral change to end the bad habit.
3. *Bait and Switch*: Once you have discovered the foundational reasons behind your bad habit, find a less-damaging substitute for it. If you feel like insulting someone, you could take a piece of gum to chew on instead, or whistle a tune that calms you down. You can also focus on your breathing: do walking or sitting meditation to remind yourself about the arising and passing of everything, and allow your tendency to say something hurtful to pass.<sup>7</sup>

If, conversely, you are the one being the subject of your partner's, parent's, child's or colleague's scathing remarks, consider the following:

- *Calm yourself down before responding*. You don't need a scathing contest or something worse. Calmly consider the possible reasons behind the scathing party's comments. If you figure out that it may be jealousy, a sense of inferiority, or just general anger, you can start feeling compassion and send forgiving thoughts to this poor culprit.

---

<sup>7</sup> Mann, D. (Nov. 162007). 3 Easy Steps to Breaking Bad Habits. *WebMD*. Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/balance/features/3-easy-steps-to-breaking-bad-habits>

- *Consider the validity of the criticism.* There may be a core of useful truth in even the worst insult. So, step over your sense of hurt and take a hard look at the facts, and any possible grounds for improvement that you could learn from and work on.
- *Thank the person who offered the criticism.* Sometimes what we experience as scathing may be a well-intended effort to help you improve. And regardless whether the comments were meant to be hurtful or not, thanking the other party may make them rethink their negativity.
- *Carry on.* Once you have responded gracefully and evaluated the message on its merit for your wellbeing and progress, you can decide what to do with the message. Just don't allow it to stop you from doing great things. That's what you are here to do anyway.<sup>8</sup>

## Envy

One of the worst things you can do to yourself is to envy others. First of all, you most likely don't know the entire story of how they got where they are, and even if you do, envy is never the way to grow. When someone accomplishes something, it is much better to turn inward and use this as a motivator to improve yourself as well. This is how we can make the world a better place: by converting our observations into motivations for improvement rather than bitterness.

We all get multiple chances in our life, and it's up to us to seize the opportunities. Unfortunately, it's the people who forego their own chances when they appear, that envy others most. This is a serious flaw, but it is one that you can overcome if you find that you have been troubled by it. If you see others doing well, turn inward and ask yourself what you need to do to improve your own life. Most of the time you already know the answer. The art is to follow up on your own advise. It's not easy. It usually takes hard work, perseverance, grit... but you can do it.

A good summary of actions to overcome envy is suggested below, inspired by *The Book of Joy* by the Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu, and Douglas Abrams:

- *Envy only hurts the envious.* If you want to be a happy person, you should stop envying others, even if it seems that they are more successful than you. Comparing is a bad habit anyway, especially when it leads to feelings of distress rather than the will to just do better on your own merit.
- *Gratitude.* When you feel a sense of envy emerging, replace it with gratitude. Think of all you have accomplished and the things that are going well in your life. There is always reason and space for thankfulness.

---

<sup>8</sup>Babauta, L. (ND). *The Art of Handling Criticism Gracefully. Zen Habits*. Retrieved from <https://zenhabits.net/criticism/>

- *Transform Envy into Motivation.* Just like with the introductory story to this chapter, you can convert envy into motivation to do your best in the areas where you are gifted. Your ability to shine may lay in a different field, but that doesn't mean that it's any less.
- *Reframe Your Envy.* It's not all gold that glitters. Every accomplishment comes with some challenges. Consider that when overcome by envy: you may not even truly want what the other party has if you consider all that goes with it. So, be sober about it, and keep yourself in balance.
- *Apply Mudita.* The Dalai Lama suggests adding some 'mudita' to your life. Mudita is a Tibetan way of being happy for others when they succeed. It can be seen in light of our interbeing: if we are all interconnected, then the blessings of others are also partly ours. This mindset will encourage us to wish the other party well, and rejoice in their fortune.
- *Let Go and Relax.* That is the best favor you can do yourself, health wise. Envy brings stress, and there are so many people who are very successful and never have enough. They constantly envy others. Don't be that way. It's poisonous to your health and wellness. So, let go and relax.<sup>9</sup>

#### Point to Ponder

Which of the four elements of LOSE have you detected in yourself?  
 How have you dealt with it, and if not yet, how will you from here onward?  
 Which of the four LOSE behaviors do you consider most destructive?  
 To whom and why?

## GAIN and AI

So far, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has not been a factor of discussion in this book, because the content is very much focused on human awareness toward more fulfilled and rewarded living. I believe, however, that given the importance of AI in today's world, some observations should be in place.

AI is the collective reference to a machine's ability to execute intellectual functions that we associate with human minds, such as perceiving, reasoning, learning, interacting with the environment, problem-solving, decision-making, and even demonstrating creativity.<sup>10</sup> There have been major outbursts

<sup>9</sup>Bokhari, D. (ND). Overcoming Envy. *Meaningful HQ*. Retrieved from <https://www.meaningfulhq.com/overcoming-envy.html>

<sup>10</sup>Rai, A., Constantinides, P., & Sarker, S. (2019). Next-generation digital platforms: Toward human-AI hybrids. *MIS Quarterly*, 43(1), iii-ix.

of enthusiasm and excitement, especially amongst scientists, about the accelerated emergence of AI in recent years. Similarly, there has been immense apprehension amongst current and future members of the workforce regarding the potential of AI taking over their jobs and making the human factor insignificant in various professional actions.

With investments in AI predicted to reach \$232 billion by 2025, and with an ever-expanding use of AI in industries varying from marketing and healthcare to finance, including ever broadening interactions with internal and external human stakeholders, it becomes important to start thinking about the responsibility that will have to be taken—and by whom—when AI practices turn out to be unethical or harmful. Depending on the severity of the damage, it has thus far been that the machine developers are mostly held accountable, followed by the companies offering the AI service, and AI itself.<sup>11</sup>

Questions have also been raised by scholars and various actors in society, whether AI could be assigned a decision-making position in any interactional setting, for instance, in democratic participation. The very fact that this question is raised today has offended many individuals, who feel that democratic participation has always been the privilege of human beings, and AI is not human. Additionally, receiving its communicative and reasoning abilities from algorithms, it is hard to imagine a situation where this systemic construction should be allowed to participate in political decision-making on equal terms with humans.<sup>12</sup> The skepticism in granting AI a place in the decision-making ranks of major entities is largely based on the claim that AI lacks the relevant cognitive faculties, primarily intuition, which is often needed at those levels.<sup>13</sup>

However, there are strong expectations that the development of intelligence levels for AI will increase in future decades to the point that it will match human intelligence. Since AI has seen a strong development in healthcare, the question on the table is therefore, whether AI scientists should be subject to the Hippocratic Oath.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Sullivan, Y. W., & Fosso Wamba, S. (2022). Moral judgments in the age of artificial intelligence. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 178(4), 917–943.

<sup>12</sup> Beckman, L., & Rosenberg, J. H. (2022). The democratic inclusion of artificial intelligence? exploring the patiency, agency and relational conditions for demos membership. *Philosophy & Technology*, 35(2).

<sup>13</sup> Khan, A., Jillani, M.A.H.S. and Maseehullah, M. (2019). Killer Robots and Their Compliance with the Principles of Law of War. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3840427>

<sup>14</sup> Sifakas, N. M. (2021). Do we need a hippocratic oath for artificial intelligence scientists? *AI Magazine*, 42(4), 57–61.

All of the above ruminations serve as a contemplative point to all of us regarding the role of AI in our daily life, and its prominence in our current and future undertakings. As AI develops in the future, awareness-based practices may have to be reviewed on their applicability to non-human colleagues and society members. However, as matters currently stand, the GAIN concept would not be applicable to AI. One could make the point that AI does engage in *generating, appreciating, internalizing,* and renewing (*newness*), but the *conscious* foundation that is needed to interpret experiences, evaluate how they made us feel, and considering them within the wholeness of a lifetime toward ongoing newness, with attention to moral righteousness, personal and societal wellness, and resilience, is thus far a human prerogative, that cannot be implemented through algorithms. Thus far, researchers are generally in agreement that it will be challenging for a machine to achieve advanced stages of consciousness, in particular reflective consciousness, which demands multi-levels of cognitive abilities such as awareness of awareness, thinking about thinking, or knowledge of knowledge, along with the will to make choices and act on them.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Leader Inside**

This path I am treading  
Is paved by the choices I made  
And will evolve as a result  
Of how through life I wade

While the world outside  
May influence the tide  
My perspectives and actions  
Make my path narrow or wide

I may not be in charge  
Of whatever might emerge  
But my attitude guides me  
In converting drought to surge

The leader of my life  
I am, without a doubt  
I'm grateful for my steps  
In living good, gentle, yet stout

*-Joan Marques*

---

<sup>15</sup>Meissner, G. (2020). Artificial intelligence: Consciousness and conscience. *AI & Society*, 35(1), 225–235.

## Chapter Highlights

- *Leading with a GAIN Perspective:* This can make an important difference in the way you treat yourself and those you interact with.
- *Being a good self-leader:* this means that you need to be able to lead well and follow well simultaneously. Stability works best toward your own peace of mind, and toward the peace of mind of those who surround you.
- *“Self” is a questionable subject.* We all have egos. To keep the ego within decent proportions, it is healthy to remember Thich Nhat Han’s notion of interbeing, and the general Buddhist psychological stance of dependent arising.
- *Interactions with people can be ambivalent.* We get to deal with people and situations we may not be overly fond of. But do consider, that everything and everyone that lives, wants to be happy and be alive.
- *You have the ability to decide our attitude.* You cannot prevent what happens, but you can decide how you will look at it, and what you will do about it.
- *Avoid the LOSE Mindset.* LOSE stands for:
  - *Lamenting:* We all deserve to mourn our losses, and some losses are more painful than others. But there comes a time that you have to get yourself up and move on. Lamenting too long is not just a bad thing for your mind, it can also make you physically ill, and it will affect your relationships with others and your outlook on life.
  - *Obsessing:* When you want something very much and you cannot get it, it can become an obsession. Similarly, when you want to get rid of something and you cannot, it can become an obsession. Obsessing is a dangerous state of mind, as it is irrational, and can lead to irrational acts. If, therefore, you feel as if you are obsessing over something, seek help.
  - *Scathing:* Scathing is mean. It negatively affects your mind, and it alienates others from you. Unfortunately, some people have made scathing their second nature. They seem to be in the habit of deriding others, and it’s very likely that they do that in a desperate effort to make them feel better about themselves. People who mock others are most likely miserable. They have a deep-rooted unhappiness inside that they can only temporarily silence by making others miserable as well.
  - *Envy:* One of the worst things you can do to yourself is to envy others. When someone accomplishes something, it is much better to turn inward and use this as a motivator to improve yourself as well. This is how we can make the world a better place: by converting our observations into motivations for improvement rather than bitterness.