

# Making the World a Better Place - A Single Man's Dream!

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All of the great accomplishments that have ever happened began with a person who had a dream. Somebody rebuffed the nay-sayers and said to them, "This can be done, and I am the one who will do it." And in many instances they changed the world for better. This is a reality; however, for most of us this is the privilege of a few with some special circumstances at their disposal. Interestingly this is one of many myths that have disabled our creative instances for years. Things like, they must have had some special circumstances in their lives, their parents might be rich, their teachers might have had some axe to grind, the political system might be stable, the policies might have had some leniency towards them, always used as an excuse. However, if they find someone who was not able to have any of the above handicaps the last comment that surfaces is "LUCK". The label of being lucky has almost paralyzed whatever introspection we might have. This is again, one of many myths that have created an illusion about the power of a single man and it's potentials to do wonders and fulfill its promise to God of being His viceroy. These powers are no less than the driving force towards bringing fundamental changes in the human system. Over the centuries we have experienced that men and women who have discovered this truth have been the frontrunners in all the changes made in the world and all others followed.

Some time back people were having a discussion at a dinner table about the goals of one of their colleagues, who was quite ambitious and desirous to change the system and bring a positive change in the society. The guy in question was a recent graduate and had just started his job. He was burning with desire with flashing eyes, having little knowledge of the things but great attitude to prove him right. "But gentleman tell me how a little straw can stop the flow of a running wheel grinding the corn". A question was put to him during the talk. The question was pretty smart and quite relevant too. The young gentleman although did not have any satisfying answer yet he never bothered about such discouraging remark. Looking at the structure of the civil society in our country this has really become a quagmire. Who will stop the flow? Can a single man do it? Before answering these questions let us settle a simple issue why are we bent upon stopping the flow altogether, or reversing it? Our history shows that instead of using a straw we put a SAW in the wheel and stop any movement at once. Thus we start trying to repair the wheel again. Can't we just ask how we can chip in to do our bit? Can't we just ask what is my duty and how I "as a person" can contribute in my field? How I can have a share in making this world a better place to live.

Let us peep a little into the history. Starting from the Newtonian era; what great difference has Newton made in the learning and working of the universe today. Why he has been put second in the list of the hundred most influential people of the world history, even before the name of the Jesus Christ. He was sitting and observing, a simple phenomenon. He then translated that phenomenon into words that revolutionized all the studies there upon. What was he, just a human being. He did not have any need to have a full force of mighty men to convey his message. He never might have thought to form group that could take his point forward and let him be the most influential man. While looking around and seeing the habits of our people we sometimes feel that people in our society are living in the Newtonian era. Sitting, observing however, deducting nothing. Are we lost somewhere or what?

The greatest of human powers is to get illuminated by simple observations. All the great achievements of the world started merely with observations. We get illuminated however, we fail to enlighten ourselves. This lack of enlightenment takes us to questions like how I as an individual can make a difference. The question is not so easy to answer. In our daily routine we are faced with hundreds of negative questions, observations, feelings and above all experiences that deter us from making any real effort towards making the difference. Our friends, family, colleagues and above all our elders, whom wisdom we most bank upon, help us in forming the opinion that one man can never make a difference. However, for those who have willed to make a difference and do what they dreamt of, such things work not more than mere brief stopovers in the journey.

In the world whatever changes are made they are the result of the efforts of only 1% of the population and all the other 99 % are beneficiaries of those changes. So it means that in every time of the history there were individuals who stood ahead of the rest and were able to command an influence over the material as well as human objects. It also means that in history there are hardly any teams known whom we write in the books of history with distinction. It was only the individuals who either worked solely or lead certain groups to charge up change in their realm. It was one man who sowed the seed and let every one else plough. Rosa Park was one such example. She was the one who denied leaving her seat for a white man. It was her personal initiative that triggered a 363-day strike in the city. As a result of which the buses went deserted and the white and black sections in the buses were abandoned. Then there was the defiant force of Mother Teresa, Helen Keller and Anne Frank. All these ladies were tough in their

will power and obstinate in their objectives.

Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Roosevelt, sadly but one has to know the difference Hitler made in the world history, John F. Kennedy in the political realm and Graham Bell, Marconi, Wright brothers, Thomas Edison and Einstein in science were few men who we remember today for making the world what it is today. In the civil rights moment of 1950's how can we forget to mention Martin Luther, a black leader in America, fighting for the rights of blacks? All of these men and women had one thing in common they had a passion for their work and sense of high self esteem. Coming towards our own country and people we have examples of the genius of our two great leaders. Those who defied the odds and stood at the face of their enemies and showed a dream and won a separate country for their people. The story is not too old when we saw Abdul Sattar Edhi, Hakim Saeed, Insar Burni, Jimi Engineer as the icons of the one man making the difference in the lives of many. These are the few examples from the known circles but looking around we may find hundreds of such people in our homes, street, offices who are successful individuals who are doing something that is changing the lives of many. These people are all round us doing their work. They are least bothered as to who praises them and who does not, who rewards their efforts and who doesn't. But they are pretty sure that their efforts are not going to be wasted. If they are able to make at least one man a happy individual they would be rewarded for it.

Looking at all the successful people can we deny the force of a single man who is capable of making the difference?

Think of all the people we have never heard of who have started things large and small that help people world-wide every day. The world needs people like you to dream of something great and then to pursue it with your heart. Maybe you belong to a business, school, or organization that started out with good intentions but has settled into something very little. Shake them up and remind them of how they could really help people if only they would dream and realize their un-fetched potentials.

## The Power of One!

A number of times, a number of people have tried to make us believe that alone we are nothing. Whenever, you have to start something anew you need the support of the bigwigs. When you have to start a venture, or do a social work, or establish a new entity you have to have a strong base. Unless you qualify through this strict criterion you must not think of achieving something. Our society is filled with such thinkers. We have over the years become so negative and passive thinkers that we have installed walls around us. These walls help us to stay away from any new idea peeping and frighten us from venturing and taking initiatives.

Such people and situation have promoted us to come out with a brief list of people including both women and men, belonging to every category/field of life. These are the people who have become icons of success, achievement and influence singularly. Ironically such people are always with us. We accept it or not, but they have influenced our lives to the extent that today our every move is shaped one way or the other by them. Over the course of the history a number of lists are made of great men and women in our history. However people who influence our lives are not limited to these lists. Such people are everywhere. They may not be known personalities but when they leave the rope of life they make us feel the vacuum created because of them.

We have tried to make this, a brief yet complete list of all the major players in history. We have also tried to include people from all the major fields such as science, psychology, politics, philanthropy, social science, social work, social activists etc. However, there may be more than one entries in one field such as science. We have included Newton, Edison and Einstein. Their respective inventions/discoveries, the era of accomplishment, their personal life history and their respective influence have charged towards becoming a deciding factor of their inclusion in the list. We know that there are still people missing from the list. But we know their respective importance and influence over the mankind. Therefore we have listed them at the end of this list for any further reference.

Name	Era	Country/Region	Known For	Life Achievement/History
Sir Issac Newton	1642-1727	England	Originator of Theory of Gravity	Born after the death of his father and raised solely by the mother. Although he was bright child but inattentive in school and did not attract much attention. When he was a teenager, his mother took him out of school, hoping that he would become a successful farmer. However, by the age of eighteen his mother finally convinced about his potentials and he entered the Cambridge University, and between his twenty-first and twenty-seventh years he laid foundations for scientific theories. Newton's inventions and scientific discoveries have proved him to be one of the most influential men of the history. Now after almost three hundred years of his death we still follow and gain by his inventions and discoveries.

Charles Darwin	1809-1882	England	Theory of Evolution	Man whose theory of the evolution of man and other species grasped great interest, has been a source of influence over the mankind for decades. According to his theory of evolution, men descended from a similar creature millions of years ago. This creature was not human but much like us, and what we know today as Monkeys/Chimpanzees etc. These theories although highly criticized now, are still taught in most of the medical and scientific subjects and known to have created significant influence. Here we must remember that Darwin was also a man like us he was alone in his theory yet he convinced the whole world.
Abraham Lincoln	1809-1865	United States of America	President/ Emancipation of Slavery	Lived under the shadow of stepmother, while in his teens he left home and worked at a variety of jobs. He worked as a lawn mower, as storekeeper, as a railway worker etc. Although his election career was not so successful he was elected in 1834 to the state legislature and then continued to become a politician. His defiant stand for the emancipation of the slavery from USA moved him to propose and finally implement an amendment in the constitution of the United States that was called Emancipation Proclamation.
Thomas Alva Edison	1847-1931	America	Scientist	He had only three months of formal education, his schoolmaster considered him to be a retarded child. However, he was able to develop an electric vote recorder when he was only twenty-one years old. His most successful invention that has helped making a difference in this world is the incandescent light bulb in 1879. The light bulb by far was the most influential invention ever made that has led to one of the greatest other inventions and discoveries.
Sigmund Freud	1856-1939	Austria/Vienna	Philosopher	The originator of the psychoanalysis, a subject of study and practice that is used worldwide in both positive and negative references. He stressed the enormous importance of unconscious mental processes in human behavior. He showed how such processes effect the content of dreams and cause commonplace mishaps such as slips of the tongue and forgetting names, as well as self inflicted accidents and even diseases.
Henry Ford	1863-1947	America	Auto Maker	The founder of one of the world's most famous brand names "FORD". He never attended high school, worked as a machinist's apprentice, as a repairman and also as an engineer. His earlier two ventures were a complete failure and had he died at the age of forty he would have been rated as a failure. But at this age he started his third venture by the name of "Ford Motor Company". From here on he was more than any other single person, responsible for the introduction of the mass production techniques into modern industry. By so doing he vastly increased the standard of living throughout his nation and, ultimately, the whole world.

Albert Einstein	1879-1955	Germany	Theory of Relativity	Awarded as the most influential man of the twentieth century above politicians, social workers, philanthropists etc. His work was rather more important as it helped all others, although not apparent, in pursuit of their lives. Generally speaking his theories were much more difficult and complicated to understand than what Newton had presented. But still since these theories have produced enormous amount of influence over the mankind, one feels that they how difficult it would have been to introduce them at the first place.
Adam Smith	1723-1790	Scotland	Economist	His greatest work was "An inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations". Although he was not the first person to devote his life to the economic theory and many of his best known ideas were not original, but he was the first person to present a comprehensive and systematic theory of economics that was sufficiently correct to serve as a foundation for future progress in the field. For this reason it may fairly be said that " <b>The Wealth of Nations</b> " is the starting point of the modern study of the political economy.
Adolf Hitler	1889-1945	Germany	Dictator	Sometimes we, unwontedly have to make reference to certain events and people that have played a negative but deifying role in our lives. Hitler has been one such example. Whenever we recall Germany we cannot get away mentioning him. His role in making the world a different place after the world war II and for the times to come becoming a synonymous with terror and brutality can have placed him in this list of one man making the difference.
Muslims Making The Difference				
Muhammad Bin Qasim		Hindustan	Warrior	One of the youngest conquerors of the history. At the age of 17 this young man with a force of just 6000, in just two years, he captured entire Balochistan, Sindh and Bhawalpur up to Multan. Because of his formidable force and commitment towards the just and peaceful rule of Islam he was able to lay down the foundation for the Islamic society in areas now known today as sub-continent.
Abu Ali Sina	980-	Bukhara	Scientist	Ibn-Sina the greatest intellectual giant of the middle ages was a versatile genius who influenced the course of thought in diverse ways. Being an outstanding encyclopaedist he made lasting contributions to the medical sciences, philosophy, logic, mathematics astronomy, music and poetry. He was an eminent rational philosopher, whose invaluable discoveries in varied branches of knowledge forestalled many later discoveries and won for him an immortal place in the list of scientist and thinkers of the world. .
Muhammad Ali Jinnah	1876-1948	Pakistan	Founder of the nation	Few nations and regions in the world have had the distinction of emerging anew from the already created world map. Pakistan is among those few nations. It was no less than a miracle about sixty years ago that Muslims of India got their separate motherland, in face of all a mighty and cunning opposition. Muhammad Ali Jinnah was the man behind crystallizing the dream of the Muslims and making a change in the world map. It was again a single man's defiant struggle that helped all others to wish and see a better future for them.

Allama Iqbal	1877-1938	Indo-Pakistan	Philosopher/Gave the idea of Pakistan	<p><b><i>Khudi ko kar buland itna kae har taqdeer se phaylay Khuda bandai sai khud phuchy bata teri raza kia hai.</i></b></p> <p>The idea was immaculate the execution was even greater. However, the follower-ship lacked the same depth and understanding. But, whoever understands, practices and deliberates upon the expression of the legendary poet gathers a life long treasure.</p>
Mustafa Kamal	1881-1938	Turkey	Reformist and Ruler of turkey	<p>Turkey owes much of what it is today to the revolutionary leader of the early quarter of the twentieth century. Mustafa Kamal is known as the founder of modern Turkey. Before him Turkey was known as the "sick man of Europe", and his powerful leadership played a vital role in bringing Turkey out of the Third world list. Although because of his revolutionary reforms Turkey was able to stand on its feet yet his certain ideas were widely opposed by Islamic Jurisprudence.</p>
Abdul Sattar Edhi		Pakistan	Social Worker	<p>A man of determination and unfiltered honesty, simplicity and devotion. Always on his heels to move and help. He is the motivator behind one of the world's largest fleets of ambulances. Because of him and his wife, countless numbers of orphans, widows and helpless people got sheltered and groomed. One must ask those who have Mr. and Mrs. Edhi as their parents, and there must be a number of such kids, as to how their lives are changed under the shadow of the heavenly couple.</p>
Inspiring Women				
Florence Nightingale	1820-1910	Italy	Nurse	<p>She dedicated her life to nursing her dedication won her the rare distinction of being the founder of modern Nursing. In 1853, when Russia invaded Turkey and ignited the Crimean War (1854-1856), the British war secretary asked her to take a mission in the Crimean. She and other 38 nurses went to Uskudar (now a part of Istanbul) and found 5000 British soldiers housed in filthy, dilapidated buildings that not only lacked medical care but proper food. Under Nightingale's direction the nurses cleaned and disinfected the vermin-filled barracks. Each night, by the light of the lantern she carried "the lady with the lamp" ended her 20-hour workday by personally inspecting every ward. Within months, casualties from infection dropped from 42 percent to 2.2 percent. Later in 1860 she also founded the "<b>Nightingale School of Nursing</b>".</p>
Hellen Keller	1880-1968	United States of America	Social Work	<p>At the age of just 19 months she was left deaf, dumb and blind. After going through several testing years of her life, studying with the help of a tutor, and experiencing life's miseries and joys to its full she finally came out with her first book in 1902 "The story of my life". During World War II she made moral building tours of military hospitals and in the 1950s she undertook lecture tours in South Africa, the Middle East and Latin America on behalf of the visually handicapped. In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson awarded her the Presidential Medal for Freedom.</p>

Mother Tressa	1910-1997	Macedonia		One of the most devoted and known women in the sphere of social work in contemporary history. We all know here for her deep commitment and work for the destitute and poor in India in particular and across the world in general. She was among those very few people in the world who developed a charismatic personality because of the commitment to their work.
Rosa Parks	1913-	United States of America		Few people in the world have lived who did not have to take a life long journey to prove their metal, but to show their guts by just one of their moves. Rosa Parks was one such lady who by refusing to give up her seat to a white man in a bus in 1955, sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott that continued for 381 days and ended in success. As a result of the boycott the segregation of seats were declared unconstitutional by the United States District Courts. Thus proving to be a milestone in the civil rights history of the United States of America, and bringing America close to an end to the whites/colored controversy.
Anne Frank	1929-1945	Germany		Although she lived only for 16 years, but her work captured the eyes of many after her death. She was just 13 when she received a diary as a gift at her birthday. She started recording all the events day by day in the diary with great wit and dreams for the future. Her life was marred with unfortunate events of the war and its effects. She spent her final days in concentration camps with her family. Her diary was later published, and later it appeared in 1952 in English as Anne Frank: Diary of young girl. The influence of her words continued as a play was staged in 1955 in New York that won the "Pulitzer Prize".

**And many others including:**

- Plato
- Socrates
- Christopher Columbus
- Galileo Galilei
- Napoleon Bonaparte
- Gugilelmo Marconi
- Theodore Roosevelt
- Winston Churchill
- Joseph Stalin
- Mao Tse-Tung
- Bill Gates
- Muhammad Bin Musa Al-Khawarzimi
- Abdul Qadir Jillani
- Al-Biruni
- Umar Khayyam
- Haroo-ar-Rashid
- Tipu Sultan
- Mamoon-ur-Rashid