

How to Become a Guru without Really Trying

By Musafir

The early signs after I finished my education weren't particularly encouraging, so I left my parents, deserted my friends and changed my country. At the end of my career, I am proud to announce that I have progressed up the greasy pole satisfactorily because, at last, I find myself above the poverty line.

For the vast majority of my miserable survival, I didn't have a life, though I always pretended to have one. In reality I have been lonely, emotionally timid and miserably inept. I conveniently blamed it all on discrimination. Others sympathized with me and believed that I had the potential to do better had I stayed back in the old country.

I succeeded in pulling together a bunch of friends most of whom were as dull and mind-numbingly boring as I was. We became a very close-knit, ferociously loyal team. These friends were the only ones who would listen to my substandard rhetoric at meaningless parties. Nevertheless, this made me feel immensely proud. Encouraged by this mediocrity, I expanded my reach to speaking at marriages and family gatherings.

One of my main reasons for the compulsion to impress my equally inept friends was that I could never escape the tragic state of my soulless job and career that had put my life on hold. For a while, I had this nagging feeling that all my glories were confined to my equally bungling friends. Also, more worrying, my "intellectual factor" was diminishing as many of my friends started competing with me for 'equal time and equal absurdity.'

Fortunately I came across a survey that revealed that a whole generation of men and women had realized that the "You can have it all" dream was just that – a dream. I found a bunch of younger friends and relatives who had beaten themselves up at work desperately trying to achieve the impossible dream. As a matter of fact, they were the ones most concerned about whether their family and friends thought they were doing well in life. Since no one in my equally inept circle of friends cared to fill this vacuum, I decided to take on this daunting task. To my pleasant surprise, very soon I assumed the status of a guru among them. If you too want to be a dominant force among these, off-shored, downsized washouts, follow my expertise. Keep a condescending attitude (at least the five key ones) and remember the corresponding one-liners to go with each attitude type.

1. *Heads I win, tails you lose!* Needless to mention that this is a win-win attitude. You can intimidate any gullible creature by uttering it 'exactly' before letting them go any further:

Gullible Creature (GC): "My life is slipping away."

Guru: "Exactly!"

GC: "I need to change my priorities."

Guru: "Exactly!"

GC: "Oh, what is the purpose of it all?"

Guru: "Exactly."

2. *You ought to respect me!* The idea is to hide your ignorance at all costs. The recommended *mantra* here is, "You bet!"

GC: "Am I failing because of a mid-life crisis?"

Guru: "You bet!"

GC: "Should I start thinking from the right side of my brain, instead of the left?"

Guru: "You bet!"

GC: "Obviously, we can all learn the purpose of our existence from you."

Guru: "You bet!"

3. *You are worthless; I am not!* The idea here is to nip the gullible mind in the bud; otherwise, they may become a threat to your intellect and social standing someday. The killer phrase is, "That's what you think."

GC: "Sometimes I feel that I still have time to achieve my dreams."

Guru: "That's what you think!"

GC: "Well, there must be a place for me in the cosmos!"

Guru: "That's what you think!"

GC: "I firmly believe that God had a purpose in mind before creating me."

Guru: "That's what you think!?"

4. *Always make them feel guilty!* The gullible have two major weaknesses, feelings of shame and feeling of guilt. A guru has to make sure that the gullible masses never rise above their guilt. I highly recommend the one-liner, "I've had just about enough." This has worked wonders for me.

GC: "Socrates taught that the unexamined life was not worth living. Have you ever examined your own life?"

Guru: "I've had just about enough."

GC: "But you have evaded all my questions with one-liners."

Guru: "I've had just about enough."

GC: "How you got here, I mean how did you become a guru? Is that Google, AltaVista or Ask Jeeves? Why don't you directly take me to that search engine?"

Guru: "I've had just about enough."

5. *Obey me!* There will come a time in the life of every gullible when he or she will find you overwhelming. You must show your compassion at that time to bring them back into your fold. The most effective one-liner for such a situation is, "That is your decision." The idea is to allow them some space by keeping a short leash.

GC: "I want to try real medicine instead of sipping herbal tea ten times a day."

Guru: "That is your decision!"

GC: "I really do not want to believe in a guru-of-the-month."

Guru: "That is your decision!"

GC: "I want you to stop intruding in my life and simply go away."

Guru: "That is your decision!"

I hope the above steps will help you reach 'self-actualization' without climbing the steep steps of Maslow's pyramid. It has not only worked for me, but has also provided me with much needed meaning of life. Congratulate me; I am a 'guru' without really trying!