

LANGUAGE OF MOTIVATION IN ROBIN SHARMA'S *THE MONK WHO SOLD HIS FERRARI*

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**ABSTRACT** Robin Sharma is a contemporary writer of repute who through his books and blogs motivate and inspire people to push themselves to their limits and achieve what they are really capable of. We have, in this paper, attempted to analyse the language employed by Sharma in his most popular book *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* and show how language plays a crucial role in transforming people. This book is, in effect, a remarkable story about living one's dreams.

**KEYWORDS** : language, motivation, potential, positive, transform

Robin Sharma's *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* is a self-help book which aims to tap the latent potential in the readers as also to make them more successful in their daily endeavors. The author in this book uses motivational language to achieve what he intends to do.

### I. Vocabulary

The best-selling writer uses specific words/phrases which boost the morale of the readers. He also at times uses contrasting sets of words/phrases in course of his writing to highlight the importance of lessons in an attempt to drive home the point. We list out the sets of words/phrases that Sharma uses in his book to account for our argument.

#### I.1 List of words/phrases that evoke positive feelings and please the readers:

- Symphony of nature (Sharma: 18)
- Sympathetic (Sharma:16)
- Radiant (Sharma: 17)
- Majesty(Sharma:18)
- Gracefully(Sharma:20)
- Angelic (Sharma:21)
- Tranquility (Sharma:25)
- Panacea (Sharma:171)
- Elegantly (Sharma:10)

#### I.2 List of words/phrases that make readers feel more zestful and lively for a better living:

- Unbridled energy (Sharma:31)
- Brimmed with vibrancy (Sharma:51)
- Indomitable spirit (Sharma:96)
- Exultation (Sharma:16)
- Enchantment (Sharma:16)
- Zeal (Sharma:17)
- Splendor (Sharma:18)
- Exhilarated (Sharma:18)
- Gushing (Sharma:19)
- Tenacity (sharma:22)
- Vitality (Sharma:10)

#### I.3 Sets of contrasting phrases used to impact the readers:

- Sickly pallor-splendid shimmer of health (Sharma:29)
- Wintry wasteland-lush place filled with roses, daffodils and orchids (Sharma:140)
- Frail old litigator-a vital, young Adonis (Sharma:171)
- Hard hitting, bone crunching counsel-well heeled (Sharma:179)

**I.4** Robin Sharma writes in the preface: *Too many people live the same year 80 times and call it a life.* This, in my understanding, is the quintessential thought Dr Sharma has about life. In other words, Sharma is convinced that an ordinary human being fails to realize the true potential of her/his life. So he carefully chooses appropriate words ordinarily exhibiting mechanical living. His aim is clear, i.e. to make the reader picture a career and life with peace and success.

- Trifling (Sharma:43)
- Frenetic (Sharma:6)

- Grueling (Sharma:9)
- Tedious (Sharma:70)
- Gloom (Sharma:63)
- Obscure (Sharma:6)
- Somberness (Sharma:6)
- Droned (Sharma:6)

### II. Literary devices

The award winning author abundantly uses literary devices to add beauty to the text, bring about clarity and make the reading an extraordinary experience. Besides, he presumably uses them to convey complex concepts in a simple manner thereby inspiring readers.

#### II.1 Metaphor

- Shackles of reason (Sharma:17)
- Oasis of enlightenment (Sharma:17)
- Spark of awareness to light their candle of compassion (Sharma:177)

#### II.2 Simile

- Freedom is like a house(Sharma:149)
- Time slips through our hands like grains of sand(Sharma:172)
- I soaked it up like a sponge(Sharma:3)

#### II.3 Assonance

- Rekindle the inner fire(Sharma:12)
- Enchanting environment(Sharma:13)
- Enormous expectations(Sharma:2)

#### II.4 Alliteration

- Timeless tradition(Sharma:14)
- Trifling thoughts(Sharma:56)
- Shedding the shackles of self(Sharma:176)
- Quagmire of crisis and chaos(Sharma:169)
- Blue blood(Sharma:3)

#### II.5 Pun

- Huge difference between well-being and being well off (Sharma: 29).
- The purpose of life is a life of purpose (Sharma: 74).
- Failing to plan is planning to fail (Sharma: 163).
- We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience (Sharma: 170).

#### II.6 Other Figures of Speech

- Those whose cups are always empty [Transferred epithet] (Sharma:95)
- Killing time [Personification] (Sharma:166)
- Blinding glimpse [Oxymoron] (Sharma:1)

### III. Expressions that persuade/stimulate people

**III.1** As has been stated elsewhere, the bestselling author aims at transforming people. I concur with Robin Sharma when he says that the first step towards transformation is to accept one's mistakes. He uses expressions such as 'to err is human' probably to break the

hindsight bias and make the reader accept mistakes. Some of the expressions are given below as illustrations:

- Never regret your past. Rather embrace it as the teacher that it is (Sharma: 16).
- There are no mistakes in life, only lessons (Sharma: 46).
- The only way to improve tomorrow is to know that you did wrong today (Sharma: 125).
- Happiness comes through good judgment, good judgment comes through experience and experience comes through bad judgment (Sharma: 125).
- Pain is often the precursor to personal growth (Sharma: 126).

**III.2** I am of the opinion that, the author uses sentences to emphasize on self and highlight one's true self potential. He drives home the message that one's true friend is oneself and these illustrations also justify the classification of the book under self-help category.

- Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakens. (Sharma:40)
- The boundaries of your life are merely creations of the self. (Sharma:52)
- Self-knowledge is the stepping stone to self-mastery (Sharma:63)
- There is nothing noble at being superior to some other person. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self. (Sharma:69)
- Trust yourself, create the kind of life you will be happy to live with all your life. Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement. (Sharma:72)
- People who study others are wise but those who study themselves are enlightened. (Sharma :)
- The only limits on your life are those that you set yourself.(Sharma:100)
- Don't race against others. Race against yourself.(Sharma:148)
- I am more than I appear to be, all the world's strength and power rests inside me.(Sharma:153)
- For what lies behind you and what lies in front of you matters little when compared to what lies within you.(Sharma:196)

**III.3** Robin Sharma uses some statements/phrases to highlight some important points about small things, priorities, life perspectives etc.

- A life overflowing with wonders is built day by day, block by block. Small victories lead to large victories.(Sharma:196)
- Journey is to be enjoyed. The road is just as good as the end.(Sharma:195)
- Happiness is a journey not a destination.(Sharma:184)
- The quality of your life will come down to the quality of your contribution. (Sharma:174)
- The freedom to see the forest beyond the trees, the freedom to choose what is right over what seems pressing.(Sharma:149)
- The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.(Sharma:84)
- You will never be able to hot a target that you cannot see.(Sharma:80)
- We should live our lives in such a way that when we die, the world cries while we are rejoicing.(Sharma:176)

**III.4** The important lessons are incorporated as part of the fable where an experienced friend/superior shares his wisdom to his friend/apprentice. The repeated use of words like 'you', 'your', 'our', 'we' etc. throughout the writing leaves an impression on the reader as if a true, caring, wise friend of theirs shared his feeling with them thereby achieving a sense of intimacy with readers and making the message more emphatic. This can be illustrated by:

- The secret of happiness is simple; find out what you truly love to do and then direct all of your energy towards doing it. Once you do this, abundance flows into your life and all your desires are filled with ease and grace. (Sharma: 71)
- Never forget the importance of living with unbridled exhilaration. Never neglect to see the exquisite beauty in all living things. Today, and this very moment, is a gift. Stay focused on your purpose. The universe will take care of everything else. (Sharma: 92)
- The universe favors the brave. When you resolve to lift your life to its highest level, the strength of your soul will guide you to a magical place with magnificent treasures. (Sharma: 143)
- Wage war against the weaker thoughts that have crept into the palace of your mind. They will see that they are unwanted and leave like unwelcome visitors. (Sharma: 158)
- Time slips through our hands like grains of sand, never to return

again. Those who use time wisely from an early age are rewarded with rich, productive and satisfying lives. (Sharma: 172)

- The noblest thing you can do is to give to others. Start focusing on your higher purpose. (Sharma: 180)
- We are all here for some special reason. Stop being a prisoner of your past. Become the architect of your future. (Sharma: 197)

#### IV. QUOTES BY FAMOUS PEOPLE.

**IV.1** The amount of decision fatigue associated with breaking out a routine is quite substantial. So, to make his messages more emphatic and transformative the author takes the help of quotations by eminent personalities. I opine that he employs them at the start of chapters and even book to convey the crux in a clever, concise manner. Following are the quotes used by the author:

- Life is no brief candle for me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations. [George Bernard Shaw]
- Sure I am that this day we are masters of our fate, that the task which has been set before us is not above our strength; that its pangs and toils are not beyond my endurance.as long as we have faith in our own cause and an unconquerable will to win, victory will not be denied us.[Winston Churchill] (Sharma:2)
- Great dreamers' dreams are never fulfilled, they are always transcended. [Alfred lord Whitehead] (Sharma:27)
- I am an artist at living-my work of art is my life. [Suzuki] (Sharma:32)
- Most people live-whether physically, intellectually or morally-in a very restricted circle of their potential being. We all have reservoirs of life to draw upon of which we do not dream. [William James] (Sharma:41)
- Trust yourself. Create the kind of life you will be happy to live with all your life, make the most of yourself by flaming the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement. [Forster Cleland] (Sharma:72)
- Good people strengthen themselves ceaselessly. [Confucius] (Sharma:93)
- Well-arranged time is the surest mark of a well arranged mind. [Sir Isaac Pitman] (Sharma:159)
- Everything that lives, lives not alone, not for itself.[William Blake] (Sharma:173)
- When I admire the wonder of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands in worship of the creator.[Mahatma Gandhi] (Sharma:181)

**IV.2** The author likely uses quotes in middle of writing to add emphasis and reflect the thinking of men from ancient times who are respected, adored and admired by the readers.

- The price of greatness is responsibility over each of your thoughts. [Winston Churchill] (Sharma:51)
- Success, like happiness, cannot be pursued.it must ensue. And it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to cause greater than oneself. [Victor Franklin] (Sharma:56)
- The secret of success is constancy of purpose. [Benjamin Disraeli] (Sharma:77)
- We are shaped and fashioned by what we love. [Goethe] (Sharma:83)
- No man is free who is not a master of himself. [Epictetus] (Sharma:96)
- We don't laugh because we are happy. We are happy because we laugh. [William James] (Sharma:129)
- Character is higher than intellect. A great soul will be strong to live as well as think. [Emerson] (Sharma:134)
- Real generosity toward the future consists in giving all to what is present. [Albert Camus] (Sharma:14)

#### V Conclusion:

Robin Sharma presumably in his book attempts to provide the reader a progressive approach to living with greater courage, balance, abundance, peace, success and joy. He employs language in a clever way with impactful vocabulary, varied literary devices, affirming phrases and sentences, invaluable quotes by great men to scaffold his school of thought along with repetitions of words like 'you', 'our', 'your', 'we' etc. in course of writing to achieve a sense of inclusiveness with reader as also to motivate the reader to realize his/her true potential.

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