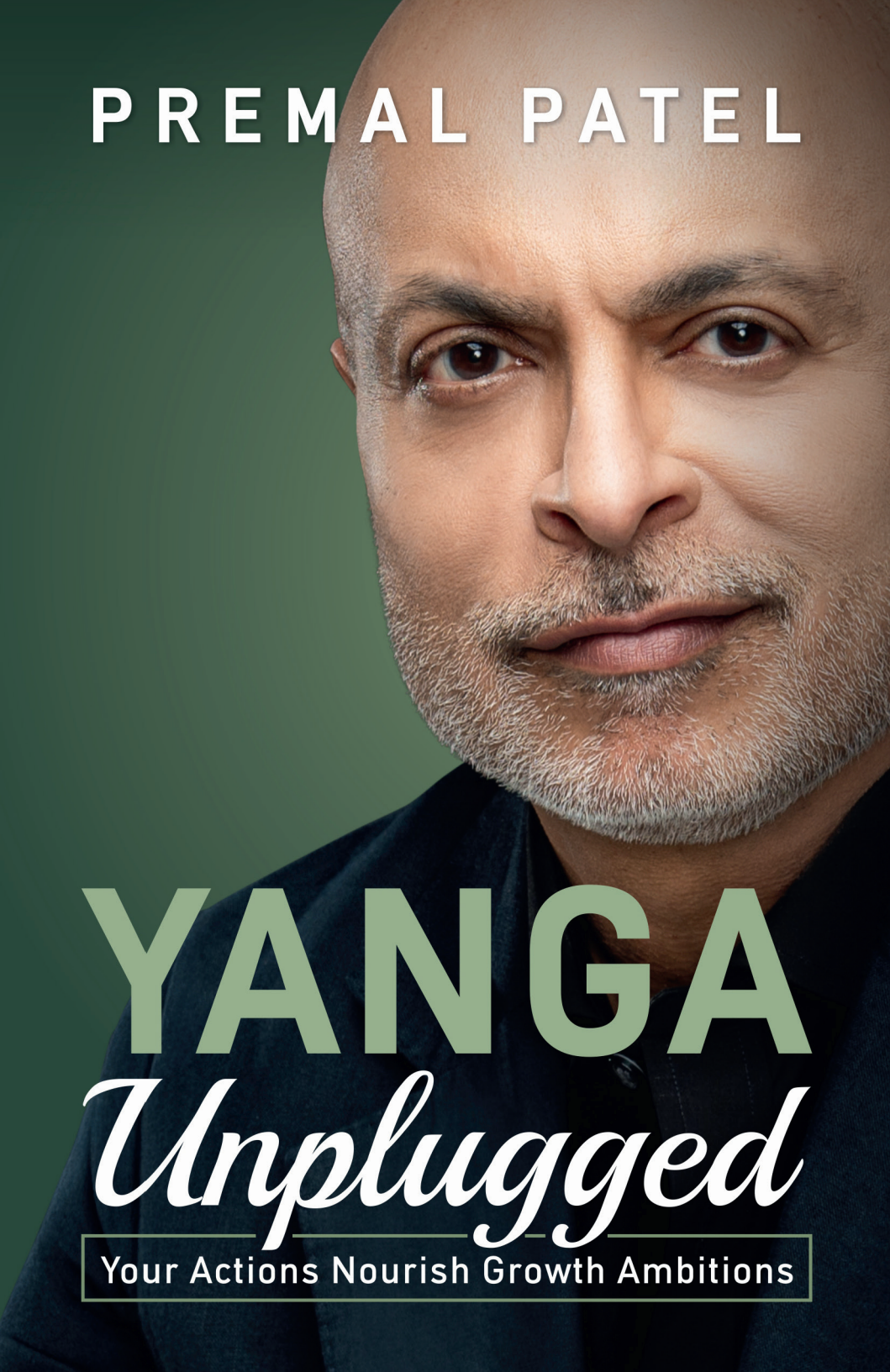


A close-up portrait of Premal Patel, a middle-aged man with a shaved head and a light beard, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a dark blue shirt. The background is a solid dark green.

PREMAL PATEL

YANGA
Unplugged

Your Actions Nourish Growth Ambitions

YANGA UNPLUGGED

PREMAL R. PATEL



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Growth Ambitions

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Yanga Unplugged

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To my Fathers, forever my inspiration and guiding light

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I am deeply indebted to my Fathers (RG and GR) for teaching me valuable lessons early on in my life. I am grateful for the teachers who encouraged me not to think beyond what they taught, as they influenced me to break the rules. My deepest appreciation for my family and those I love for supporting my journey and putting up with me over the years (it has not been easy for them). Finally, a special thank you to the team at Passionpreneur Publishing for believing in my story and championing it tirelessly.

TESTIMONIALS

‘Prem Patel is an exceptional people’s person and networker. I had the good fortune to have benefited from his business development skills two decades ago when he managed growth for BPG out of Dubai. I would call Prem a glass always half full—brimming with positive energy and optimism that is hugely infectious. Over the years, while he has matured, his positive energy and ‘never say never’ spirit has not waned. I would personally rate him as one of the most positive people I have come across in my four-decades-plus professional career.’

—AVI BHOJANI, GROUP CEO BPG GROUP

‘Heartfelt and authentic—many people can learn from Premal’s words of wisdom intertwined with the legacy from his own father-figures.’

—NICOLE SOAMES, AUTHOR AND CEO DIADEM

‘Don’t hesitate—jump right into this very readable, actionable and honest guide book for life! In the many years I’ve known and worked with Prem, he has been a positive, thoughtful, and engaging individual who makes stuff happen, someone that you want to spend time with and have on your team. Now I know why—it’s his YANGA!’

—JEREMY NICHOLDS, EXECUTIVE LEADER

‘Premal Patel combines his poignant personal stories and life experiences with leadership lessons distilled from a career spanning three continents to deliver a highly readable and compelling guide on how to take purposeful action to achieve one’s career and life ambitions.’

—RAVI CHATURVEDI, MANAGING DIRECTOR,
DIGITAL PLANET, THE FLETCHER SCHOOL OF LAW AND
DIPLOMACY, TUFTS UNIVERSITY

‘YANGA Unplugged is more than a book—it’s a reflection of who Prem is as a leader and a human. Authentic, grounded, and deeply intentional. His personal journey gives powerful context to the way he lifts others. This book is a spark—it challenges you to dig deep, believe in yourself, and take meaningful action toward the growth and life you desire.’

—TRICIA MANNING, EXECUTIVE COACH, AUTHOR OF *LEAD
WITH HEART AND LEAVE A LEGACY*

‘Prem’s stories and insights were very meaningful to me, especially his message that putting yourself first is not selfish, but essential. In a world where we are taught to think of others, sometimes at the cost of our own aspirations, his words are both liberating and necessary. What I found most meaningful was how Prem’s experiences, from overcoming adversity to building self-belief, are universal. His journey mirrors the resilience and adaptability that so many of us in small communities must embrace. This book is a heartfelt call to action: to trust ourselves, to keep learning, and to never let fear or age limit our ambitions. YANGA Unplugged is more than a guide; it’s a celebration of the enduring human spirit. It reminds us that even as our communities change, our capacity for hope and reinvention remains undiminished.’

—MAZARINE MEMON, ARTIST AND ENTREPRENEUR

‘After reading Prem’s book, the tune won’t leave my head: ‘Let’s Go Do The YANGA’! Indeed, let’s do it. By using personal storytelling, wrapped in the energy of a radical memoir, Prem uses the value in vulnerability to challenge traditional structures in business & life. Throughout his book, he selflessly encourages the reader to look inside to understand the true meaning of the collective stretch. A stretch that starts with self, of course, especially when it comes to that ‘common commonality’ ... perfectionism. I love that Prem challenges perfection and its naughty friend procrastination in favour of ‘doing right in the moment’. I also appreciate the energy of

TESTIMONIALS

his writing using powerful, useful, helpful lived experiences, as well as sharing simple, smart action steps. From passive dreams to active actions. Let's Unplug YANGA.'

—SUSAN FURNESS, ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIST,
AUTHOR AND COACH

CHAPTER 1

THE VOICE OF GUIDANCE: A SON'S JOURNEY THROUGH TRIUMPHS AND TRIALS

‘I nurture harmony and peace in the world, while honouring my own voice and inner strength.’

YANGA is a term commonly used in some African cultures to describe a strong sense of self-confidence, pride, and assertiveness. It represents a bold and assertive attitude towards life, often characterised by a display of resilience, courage and determination. In the Zulu culture, it holds significance and evokes a sense of strength, power and resilience.

Before I get into the core of YANGA Unplugged, I'm taking you back to 30th March 1970 to share a personal story with you. Being emotional and open does not come easily to me,

so bear with me. Over the last few years, however, I have begun to understand the importance of being more open and honest about how I feel, my beliefs, and what I want in life.

My father—RG—a popular, smart, and ambitious character with poise and presence, was a man who always put others first. Whilst a banker by profession working for Standard Bank in Nairobi, Kenya (East Africa), his true passion was cricket. He loved the game, playing for Nairobi's Premier Cricket Club and helping them win many tournaments and trophies. Always a player to watch, he leaves the impressive legacy of scoring the fastest century, which he accomplished in just 40 minutes. At 24, he had his whole life ahead of him when he married his beautiful wife, aged 16. (Yes, that's correct, 16, as you could do that back in India in those days.) Very soon, they had my sister in 1966; I came along in 1969. (Now you all know how old I am.)

The highly ambitious RG wanted to provide a better life for his children, as Kenya was a tough place to make it big in the corporate banking world (especially for people of Asian descent). In early 1970, RG received a confirmation to transfer to England with Standard Bank in June of that year. This was big news, as England (specifically London) was a dreamland for many East-African Asians who wanted to work hard and build a better life for their families.

As you can imagine, everyone in our family was celebrating. Crucially, two important actions would now take place. Firstly, my father would move his family to London, UK and

start a new life with a promising corporate career. Secondly, my grandfather—GR (he was actually known as GR Barclays Bank, having completed 30 years of service) would fulfil his ambition to move back to India for his retirement with my grandmother. (Both had been away from India and their families since the early 1940s.)

Knowing his cricketing days would now be over, my father resolved to play as much as he could before boarding the aircraft and saying goodbye to all his friends and siblings in Nairobi. The Premier Club Management would miss his presence and flair for the game, especially as the Kenyan Cricket Team scouts were watching him closely, but understood his reason to go—family first.

On 29th March 1970, RG was playing his last tournament, in Mombasa, for Premier Cricket Club. As this was a major cup game, it was an important one to win (both for RG himself to leave on a high, and for the club in terms of the league). They won, and RG captained their win as expected. It was celebrations all round. As the winning captain, he could leave with his head held high and trophy in hand.

CELEBRATING THE HUMAN CONNECTIONS THAT UNITE US

On 29th March 1970, RG was in the passenger seat of a vehicle as he and another player from the winning team drove back from Mombasa to Nairobi. RG was holding the winning

trophy as they talked about the game. It was nightfall, and the roads from Mombasa to Nairobi were very dark with no streetlights. The roads were rough, so I doubt they had a smooth ride. Back then, large trucks would quite often park up on the side of highways so drivers could rest after long journeys. Some would remain in their vehicles, while others would sleep under a cover placed over their trucks, which were usually dark in colour.

Then, in a split second—BANG—it was all over.

RG's vehicle hit a covered truck at full speed. Although the driver tried swerving to avoid impact, it was unavoidable. With the impact occurring on the passenger side, my father was seriously injured at only 31 years of age. After the impact, there was only silence. They were in the middle of nowhere, with both men's families waiting for them to return home and celebrate the win.

Now, imagine the scene at home. As they waited to celebrate, my father's family found out about the accident through a close family friend—but not the extent of his injuries. My grandfather, grandmother and uncle quickly travelled to the hospital in Mombasa where paramedics had taken my father. When they arrived, my father was in critical condition. At this stage my mother was unaware of what had happened. The next day, my mother arrived in a state of panic, spending time with my father by his bedside before returning home to her children. When she reached them, she received the news that my father had passed away. It was 30th March, 1970.

Everyone was shocked. My stunned mother was completely still, widowed at just 22, with a two-and-a-half year old daughter and me at just 10 months. Obviously, at that age I had no idea what was going on; I simply demanded my mother's time and attention whilst she was traumatised, not knowing what to do. What must have been going through my mother's mind? Only she knows. As for my grandparents, losing their eldest son in such a way would make even the most resilient and strong-minded person fall apart.

It was the human connections, the community around my family, that got them through the dark days that followed. My father's death brought his parents closer to my mother—they lived by the mantra, 'We're in it together.'

ADAPTING TO CHANGE AND NAVIGATING NEW REALITIES

What happened next was nothing short of amazing. My grandfather, GR, a man with a strong presence and a deeply caring personality, decided to follow through with my father's ambition to move to the UK. He negotiated a move to London with Barclays Bank, where he could continue working until he was 65 (UK retirement age at that time). Imagine his resilient mindset—having been all ready to pack up and move back to India after what must have felt as a lifetime in Nairobi, Kenya, he had to manage a major turnaround in his and his family's life overnight.

After we moved to the UK in June 1971, GR started working for Barclays in London while my mother (who was fragile, but strong-willed and determined) started working in retail. Imagine her situation. Having not worked a day in her life up to that point, as my father had taken care of her, here she was taking her first job in London, when English was not her first language. For that reason, she is also a true inspiration to me.

I have thought about my father every day for the last 55 years, and probably will until my last day in this beautiful world. Thinking of him makes my world a better place. Yet I never talked to him, never heard his voice, do not remember a single facial expression, and never hugged him or held his hand. However, I *hear* him—a voice inside my head guiding me, advising me, even scolding me when I have misbehaved.

My grandfather became my father figure, and there has been no one else like him. His courage, kindness, and big personality live inside me every day. After my father's death, he understandably wanted the simple things in life (peace, love, and laughter). He lived to protect his remaining family by providing them with a secure, loving environment, with his biggest ambition being to enable a solid educational foundation for my sister and me. His dream, then, was to fulfil my father's dream.



SO, LET'S GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING AND TALK ABOUT YANGA UNPLUGGED.

I was aggressively driven in my early years, an attitude which I feel comes down to the tough environment where I grew up. For example, from age eleven I woke up every Sunday morning at 7 am to work in a market with my uncle and cousin selling doormats and flooring. I earned £3 for each shift, saving some cash to help with household bills in the process. My desire to support my family was deeply embedded in my DNA.

In my late teens and early 20s, I was driven, yet calm and understanding. The vague knowledge I had of my father, coupled with the persistent desire to know more about him and his life, shaped me as a person—as the father at home, the leader at work, the coach and facilitator I aspired to be, and the successful entrepreneur I wanted to become. All these roles were carefully blended in a way that placed others first, putting their needs before mine (especially my family's). By living these values, I hoped to make my father feel proud of me.

My story highlights resilience, courage and determination, while signifying strength and power.

FROM DOUBT TO DETERMINATION

From the very beginning, the world felt different for me. Losing my father at just ten months old meant that the man who should have been a guiding light in my life was but a distant memory, a figure viewed through the lens of family stories and faded photographs. Yet in the quiet moments when life's challenges loomed large, I often found myself leaning into an inner dialogue, one infused with the wisdom and love of the father I never knew.

As I embarked on my turbulent journey into the business world, during which I faced many obstacles, I often thought about what my father would say. My first graduate job was with a bank, where I received three promotions in a short time. When I went for a more senior role four years into my career (having already moved from branch banking to Marketing in Head Office), I was passed over for the promotion for being too young. Feeling the sting of not being able to achieve the growth I craved, doubt began to creep in. While wrestling with feelings of inadequacy, I recalled the voice that had become my anchor. 'Learn from this, Premal. Every setback is an opportunity to grow. This is just the beginning.' Slowly but surely, I built a powerful network and reputation, emerging stronger than before.

Through the ups and downs, I often found myself reflecting on the lessons I believed my father would have taught me, and on the lessons imparted by my grandfather. For example,

I feel my father would have said, ‘Have courage and be kind to others.’

I realise I have many stories to share—my failures, my triumphs, and the lessons learned along the way. When I speak about resilience and strength of mind, I recall and echo the words that have guided me and which I have internalised over the years—a harmonious blend of my own experiences and the wisdom I attribute to my father.

OUR STRENGTH DETERMINES OUR JOURNEY

There are moments when I realise that while I never knew my father in life, the voice within me has become a powerful guide, shaping my choices, providing comfort during dark times, and inspiring me to strive for greatness—yes, there is more to come from me, as my journey is not over. The journey has not been easy, but it *has* been meaningful, a testament to the strength of family bonds that transcend time and loss.

As I started thinking through my story and connecting it to today’s volatile, uncertain, and often unsettling world, I realised that YANGA Unplugged can help others who are going through personal or career crises make the transition a little easier to cope with. For years, I felt I was invincible and didn’t need anyone’s help to achieve success. Unfortunately, that didn’t get me very far.

We cannot win alone. Conversation—*real* conversation—is more urgent now, and human connectivity is the central factor which will help us thrive as a community, both today and well into the future.

My life so far has been a journey of learning to balance my desire for harmony with my need for personal strength and self-expression. My deeper spiritual challenge is learning to stand firm in my truth.

The rest of this book is focused on YANGA, specifically how we can unplug my own experience in life and business to help you take action and achieve professional success, emotional fulfilment and spiritual growth. In this sense, it is important to know that YANGA can stand for **Your Actions Nourish Growth Ambitions**.



As I conclude, I understand that my North Star is not merely a destination but a continuous journey of growth, learning, and connection to my roots—whether I will ever reach it, only God knows. Through the challenges and victories, I have forged a path that honours my father's and grandfather's legacy while carving out my own identity.

For many years, I put others' needs before my own, which probably came from my grandfather telling me that I should always 'think of others'. As this was also my primary school's motto, the same message consumed me for many years.

YANGA (YOUR ACTIONS NOURISH GROWTH AMBITIONS)

Put yourself at the forefront of your focus. Take action, experiment, and try new things. Provide your brain with energy-boosters while reducing or eliminating the energy-drainers. Grow your world and yourself while sharing your stories and fulfilling your dreams. Life is short, and can be taken from us in an instant.

The first ‘tough love’ messages:

1. If you are waiting for someone to save you, you will wait forever. No one is coming.
2. You make your own choices, so be prepared to accept the outcomes.
3. You have the courage—so find it, then live your best life every day.

CHANGING DIRECTION AND TAKING MORE CONTROL MEANS YOU'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH SOME HARD CHOICES

As we navigate through this book, remember what YANGA Unplugged stands for—Your Actions Nourish Growth Ambitions. In every chapter, I will share a lesson learned, which can serve as a framework you can apply to your life. That's because everything starts with you. You can't expect anyone else to do things for you. It's all about you, and remember—you are in control.

Here, let me offer a brief overview of what's contained in subsequent chapters:

Chapter 3: The Power of Taking Action

Examine your internal and external energy influences, identifying energy-drainers and energy-boosters to create a more positive environment.

Chapter 4: Embrace Hard Times

Tough times are growth opportunities. Nourish your brain to make better choices and decisions.

Chapter 5: Seeds of Growth

Learn to handle the impact of others' opinions, while taking responsibility for your personal development.

Chapter 6: Path to Ambition

Discover your true ambitions, but don't overthink the path. Self-compassion is key.

Chapter 7: Not Every Setback is the End of the Story

View setbacks as chances to accelerate growth. Learn from mistakes and those who've supported you.

Chapter 8: The Power of Self-Belief

Understand how self-belief drives resilience and courage—the foundations of growth.

Chapter 9: The Paralysing Grip of Overthinking

Reframe your thinking to simplify decision-making and avoid overthinking.

Chapter 10: From Worrier to Acceptor

Embrace the reality that some changes will go wrong. Enjoy the journey and see each experience as a life lesson.

Chapter 11: Navigating Conversations from Inner Thoughts to Outer Voices

Develop the crucial skill of intentional, authentic communication to create real connections.

Chapter 12: The Double-Edged Sword of AI

AI is a double-edged sword—so use it to reinvent your life and improve human connections.

Each chapter will end with a few 'tough love' messages, starting here:

- The only person who doubts your self-belief is you.
- The only person who creates limiting beliefs is you.

- The only person who can take action to reduce limiting beliefs is you.

Again, it's all about you, so taking action is the only way you can move forward. Stop dwelling on the past, think ahead, and consider the beautiful world you can create starting today. What does your future look like now? Can you visualise it?

Then, take action as your first step. **YANGA—Your Actions Nourish Growth Ambitions.**

CONCLUSION

YANGA Unplugged shows you how to take control of your life by focusing on actions, building self-belief and resilience, and creating surroundings which boost positive energy. When you *don't* act, you are actually saying 'Yes' to comfort, 'Yes' to delay, and 'Yes' to the version of you that doesn't move quickly and decisively. Your inaction is still a decision, and it compounds—84% of long-term regrets are about things people didn't do. Clarity doesn't come from thinking; it comes from *doing*. If you wait until you are ready, you will wait for the rest of your life. The world rewards those who act, so take action today.

Put yourself first and make choices which lead you towards unlocking your dreams and achieving your ambitions—the truth is, no one else will do this for you. If you overthink what others might say, you will stand still. Everyone has an opinion, and many people will judge what you do and how you do it (that's human nature)...but it's *your* life to live, so live every day like it's your last day on earth.

I hope my stories and techniques resonate with you, inspiring you to create new momentum. Remember, the only person who creates limiting beliefs is you, and the only person who can take action to reduce or even remove limiting beliefs is you. So, find your courage, accept the outcomes, and live your best life.

My purpose is to inspire and improve the quality of life of as many people as I can. If you want to further your conversation, take your first step by reaching out—then, let's build a new connection.

YANGA: Your Actions Nourish Growth Ambitions.

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AUTHOR BIO

Premal Patel is a dynamic new author who masterfully blends storytelling with business impact, drawing on his extensive 30-year corporate career. Having overcome life's challenges, he offers a unique perspective on business literature. Known for his action-focused mindset, Prem excels at nurturing high-performance teams and inspiring others to achieve remarkable results. His compelling narratives entertain and empower professionals to embrace challenges, helping them thrive in life.

Through his writing, Prem aims to share lessons learned and ignite a passion for excellence in others.

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RESOURCES AND IMPORTANT LINKS

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In today's world, doing what you've always done gets you what you've always got. Our unique platform blends diverse expertise and experience of creating and growing talented individuals and high-performance teams with the science

of positive psychology, wellbeing, and wellness by providing personalised solutions to every Club Member—you choose what’s right for you! We provide experts and resources based on your individual or company values and needs. You gain access to a broad range of practitioners focussed on preventing stress to promote success, along with courses, workshops, videos, health testing, spa days, and retreats and discounts off hundreds of brands.

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We support organisations, rebuild human connections, nurture trust, and create workplaces where every voice matters. Human connection is the foundation of thriving teams. We build stronger teams and smarter leaders through structured workshops focused on ‘Leading with Trust’, ‘Seeking New Perspectives’, and ‘Creating Workplace Vitality’—all delivered by our unique ‘Mysteries in Colour’ methodology.

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CONCLUSION

Transform your culture and elevate your results. Alignifi is the only solution that turns organisational alignment into competitive advantage. We provide the insights and actions needed to transform your culture and results with real-time performance measurement.

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YANGA *Unplugged*

PUT YOURSELF FIRST.
CELEBRATE YOUR JOURNEY.
RESHAPE YOUR DESTINY.

To outrace the perils life throws your way, you'll need to be faster, smarter, and more determined than ever.

Every success story requires a potent mix of self-belief and determination—but to navigate all the daunting setbacks you'll encounter along the way, courage and authenticity are equally essential.

If you're a purpose-driven professional who's eager to harness the transformative power of resilience, YANGA Unplugged is your roadmap to unlocking your potential while honouring your roots. Using his own inspiring life story as a guide, author Premal Patel compellingly explains how to employ family wisdom to nourish a lifelong sense of purpose.

As Premal's journey from a new London arrival in the early 1970s to a successful businessman illustrates, every successful personal transformation relies on creating strong human connections and taking action. While narrating his personal path to professional success, Premal explains how to put yourself first while authentically living your own story.

So, don't fall by the wayside on the path to fulfilment. Instead, make the most of your innate talents and ambitions by absorbing the insights and strategies of someone who's expertly walked the rocky path from tragedy to triumph.

This book is a spark—it challenges you to dig deep, believe in yourself, and take meaningful action toward the growth and life you desire.

~ TRICIA MANNING, Executive Coach and Author

PREMAL PATEL

International business leader and acclaimed motivational storyteller Premal Patel has decades of valuable experience connecting people from diverse cultures and different generations. He is often known as the 'corporate connector'.

From overseeing business growth across three continents to mentoring countless professionals, Premal has transformed significant personal adversity into universal wisdom.

As a highly respected coach and mentor, Premal employs authentic storytelling techniques to help leaders unlock their teams'—and their own—full potential. With Premal as your guide, you'll confidently stride into a future of your own making.

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