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WHEN this writer was in school, a teacher was invited with her class to attend the recording of a Kaun Banega Crorepati episode. Her relay of the experience, which has stuck with this writer, highlighted one of many values upheld by Amitabh Bachchan. She said, "After being introduced, the actor walked onto the set to the crowd's cheers. Amidst it all, he stopped to pick up some trash on the floor, went backstage to discard it before re-joining the set." Somewhere in this writer's memory is another conversation about how Bachchan also leaves newspapers neatly folded for others to read. Connecting these stories, we concluded that the godly standard of cleanliness preached to children is achievable after all. Big B turned 80 earlier this month, and there's much to learn from him to further our self-growth. Here are some Bachchan-inspired lessons.

High on humility

To borrow words from poet Maya Angelou, people will never forget how you make them feel. This is where kindness goes beyond self-growth and contributes to a standing legacy.

Zarina Screwvala, co-founder and managing trustee, Swades Foundation, highlights the manner in which Bachchan interacts with those around him with humility, warmth and compassion. She shares, "I fondly recall his visit to Raigad, where he and Jayaji met with empowered communities with whom the Swades Foundation had worked for many years. Unruffled by the heat and huge crowd, he intently heard what everyone had to share, absorbed every nugget of information, and took time with each encounter before sharing genuine words of encouragement. I hope we can learn to emulate these qualities to grow into better versions of ourselves."

THE actor interacts with people with humility, warmth and compassion, shares his time and genuine encouragement.

BEFORE success arrived, Amitabh Bachchan faced several rejections by the film industry. He was also declined by All India Radio (AIR) for his now-famous 'deep baritone'. The actor has since reflected on the struggles as necessary factors that sharpened his drive for acting

Play to your strengths

Viji Venkatesh, region head, South Asia, The Max Foundation, TEDx speaker and actor, points out Bachchan's ability to play to his strengths. Watching him take over the film industry, Venkatesh drew parallels to steer her own career forward. She says, "Amitabh Bachchan was an unlikely hero as he toppled a heart-



throb of the film industry. He changed the goalpost to make an impactful difference. When I began looking for a job and didn't get what I wanted, I, too, moved the goalpost. You cannot be diffident if you want to achieve." Borrowing a line from Kaalia (1981) to encapsulate this lesson, Venkatesh shares, "Hum jahaan khade ho jaate hain, line wahin se shuru hoti hai."

Big B. Big life lessons



In Amitabh Bachchan's birthday month, experts share self-growth tips inspired by the superstar

Unbreakable resilience

Zarina Poonawalla, a leadership and emotional intelligence coach, and host of The Life Manifesto podcast, shares, "Mr Bachchan is not only a legendary actor but also a classic example of rising like a phoenix from the ashes. I remember when he went bankrupt in the late '90s, and how he rose back and retook his place in the industry. He furthered his career in his late 50s, a time when others plan to retire." Poonawalla highlights aspects of self-growth to learn — one being that failure is not final; we can learn to get up and try again.



Say it again

Film dialogues can sum up an entire journey in a few words. That is why lines like "Aree, ye jeena bhi koi jeena hai, Lallu?" (Mr Natwarlal, 1979) and "Jigar ka dard upar se kahin malum hota hai? Ki jigar dard upar se nahin malum hota hai" (Sharaabi, 1984) are just some



of the Big B dialogues **Radhika Maheshwari**, art therapist, uses as references in her sessions with clients to share new perspectives and make art therapy fun yet introspective. Noting how such lines can resonate with people, she says, "His roles aren't just iconic figures of a brooding and charming young man, they also portray transmuted emotions in the young and old alike." In an incident where a parent came to her with complaints about their child, Maheshwari shared the line, "Wahan se tumhe yeh chheh dikh raha hoga. Lekin yahan se mujhe yeh nau dikhta hai" from Aakhree Raasta (1986), and added, "Aapke bete ki life badalne ka ye Aakhree Rasta hai!" This helped widen their mind to include other aspects, and re-look at the situation with empathy.

One step at a time



For head chef and founder, Yogisattva Cafe, **Raveena Taurani**, consistency is one thing the actor has inspired her to pay attention to. "Still working at 80, his discipline is unmatched; he shows up and gets the job done. I know from experience that consistent steps lead to growth." She encourages small daily steps towards a goal even if it pushes you out of your comfort zone.

Respect for nature and surroundings



Based on his record of cleanliness, it's obvious that Bachchan would support the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, says **Riea Enok**, therapist at The Mood Space. She adds that following his example of respecting nature can boost mental well-being.

Expert 101s



○ **Big B** mastered the art of working with focused attention despite distractions and setbacks. This is possible when you identify that an activity that you are great at, is linked to your purpose to exist. If you identify it, you can bring to it an unshakeable focus. **Pooja Gangwal Sheth**, leadership coach



○ Amidst rumours, Amitabh Bachchan ensured that his relationship with Jayaji stands on a foundation built on trust and honesty. Noise from the outside did not penetrate their relationship. To have this security, which is crucial for growth, reflected in your partner says a lot. **Dr Shyam Mithiya**, psychiatrist, sexologist and counselor



○ His discipline is evident in his lifestyle — a healthy diet, gym, and yoga. This shows that age is not a barrier when it comes to fitness and it's never too late to get started on that journey. I work with many elderly folk, and Big B's approach to health and fitness has impacted the way I perceive it as a coach. **Snigdha Ravi Subramaniam**, fitness coach

