

VATSAL SHAH

REBIRTH OF

**WEIGHT DROPPED
AND LIFE GAINED**

STRENGTH

The worst enemy wasn't the food itself, but the voice inside my head. "One bite won't hurt," it whispered seductively. "You deserve a treat. What's the harm?" And there were days, more than I care to admit, where I succumbed, only to be gripped by guilt and shame afterwards.



Rebirth of Strength

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Weight dropped and life gained



Vatsal Shah



First Edition, 2023

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For Mom and Dad,

Your love and unwavering support have been the fuel that ignited my weight loss journey. Your belief in me, through every challenge and triumph, inspired me to become the best version of myself. This book is a tribute to the pillars of strength you've been in my life. Thank you for lighting up my path with your love.

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword I</i>	ix
<i>Foreword II</i>	xi
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
1. THE BREAKING POINT	1
2. CONQUERING THE MIND	7
3. THE JOURNEY BEGINS	11
4. THE POWER OF SUPPORT	24
5. ROADBLOCKS AND RESILIENCE	28
6. EMBRACING A NEW LIFESTYLE	37
7. INSPIRING OTHERS	43
8. CELEBRATING MILESTONES	53
9. CONTINUOUS GROWTH	61

FOREWORD I

One of the greatest blessings and privileges of my life as an educator is getting to engage with hundreds of young people every day – witnessing first-hand their journeys into adulthood, with all the joys, pains, and bittersweet challenges that it represents. Seeing them thrive and become the best possible version of themselves is our reward. And when our students go on to change the world in positive, impactful ways, there can be no bigger happiness.

This is why I am pleased to write this foreword. I have known Vatsal as a diligent, determined, and dedicated student whose journey to better mental and physical health is inspirational for all. I have witnessed Vatsal's journey chronicled in these pages, and I applaud his commitment to personal growth and transformation.

Sadly, Vatsal was not alone in the challenges. The UAE's rates of morbid obesity are double the world average – at around 40 per cent. Over the years it has been heartbreaking to see the increasing cases of childhood obesity. A complex set of circumstances is responsible for this, ranging from genetic and environmental factors to mental well-being and poor nutrition. For adults, obesity can have tragic consequences on their quality of life, increasing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, infertility, and cardiovascular diseases.

When he was just 16 years old, Vatsal embarked on his transformative path, to overcome the struggles of morbid obesity

and chronic illnesses. By adopting a healthier lifestyle and dedicating himself to a goal-oriented weight loss plan, he was able to transform his health – going from 140 kilos to 75 kilos over a span of 18 months. However, Vatsal’s journey goes beyond physical transformation. Along the way, this young man also gained self-esteem and self-belief, which have led him to step out of his comfort zone, experiment and succeed.

For instance, Vatsal created Fitness Freak, a digital platform in the health and wellness domain, where he shares workout videos, educational tips, and interviews with health professionals, including nutritionists, doctors, and gym trainers. Fitness Freak has inspired people on their own transformative journeys.

Personally, I was able to observe this first-hand as one of the speakers at a business conference Vatsal organised at Raffles World Academy. Vatsal’s enthusiasm, passion, and dedication to making this event a success was extremely contagious.

I wholeheartedly commend Vatsal for taking charge of his life’s journey and proactively transforming his health. Through his Fitness Freak initiative, he has touched many lives. And I hope his book will have a similar impact, inspiring readers to embrace change, unlock their potential, and embark on their own transformative journeys.

Poonam Bhojani
Chief Executive Officer, Innoventures Education, Dubai

FOREWORD II

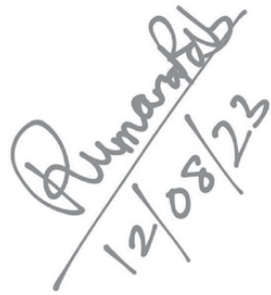
I am pleased to write this foreword for an incredible book that captures the spirit of not giving up and staying strong when faced with tough challenges. As I look at the story shared in these pages, I'm amazed by how Vatsal never gave up on improving himself, no matter how hard things got. At just 13 years of age, he started on a journey to change his life. He worked hard to lose a lot of weight and become healthier, even when it was difficult. Not only did he lose the extra weight but also became more confident and achieved some impressive accomplishments.

One of those initiatives was creating Fitness Freak, a health platform where he now shares videos of exercises, helpful tips, and talks with doctors and other experts who know a lot about staying healthy. The bigger act in my opinion is that Vatsal didn't keep this knowledge to himself. He went out of his way to connect with experts and share this information to everyone. It's clear that he truly wants to help people make smart decisions about their well-being. As someone deeply familiar with the world of yoga and therapy, I've had the privilege of witnessing how Vatsal has masterfully integrated his yoga expertise into his journey, creating a unique blend that is touching and transforming the lives of many.

But this book isn't just about getting in shape – it's about being strong on the inside too. It shows that when things got tough, Vatsal didn't back down. He faced problems head-on and turned them into chances to learn and grow. The way he handled change

and helped others is really inspiring. It's like he has an old soul and knows his purpose in life, even while still young.

All in all, I want to give a big thumbs-up to Vatsal for all he has achieved and how he is spreading good vibes through Fitness Friends. I'm totally sure that the stories and ideas in this book will get you excited to make positive changes, believe in yourself, and start your own journey of becoming the best you can be.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rumana Rab" is written above a horizontal line. Below the line, the date "12/08/23" is written in a similar cursive style.

Rumana Rab
Yoga Therapist, Founder Rumana Rab
Holistic Yoga Center, Dubai

PREFACE

I am Vatsal Piyush Shah, a high school student on an awe-inspiring journey of transformation that has seen me undergo a complete 360-degree change. My relentless determination and unwavering discipline have become the driving forces behind this remarkable metamorphosis, pushing me to challenge the boundaries of what was once deemed impossible. I firmly believe that with the right mindset and effort, anything and everything is achievable. Within these pages, I invite you on a journey that goes far beyond a simple quest for physical well-being. It is a voyage that explores the multidimensional aspects of our lives, intertwining the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual threads that shape our very existence.

I have poured my heart into each word of this book, sharing the struggles, triumphs, and the profound impact of embracing the evolution of goals. It is my sincerest hope that you too find inspiration within these pages. Please know that you are not alone in your journey and that your experiences have the power to inspire and guide others as well. Remember that this journey knows no bounds. Embrace the spirit of lifelong learning, for knowledge is the compass that leads us through the ever-evolving landscape of health. Be adaptable and allow your wellness practices to bend gracefully with the winds of transformation in your pursuit of holistic well-being.

The symphony of social connections enriches our lives, reminding us of the power of community and the joy of shared experiences.

Cherish the connections you make along the way, for they amplify the beauty of the journey and offer support during times of challenge.

Within these pages, I've also debunked myths that often shroud the path to well-being. I hope you can navigate with clarity and make informed choices that align with your unique needs and aspirations. May you carry the wisdom of this journey in your heart and embark on your own quest for greatness, with renewed vigor and a profound understanding that the journey itself is the destination. Embrace every challenge, and every victory, for they shape the beautiful tapestry of your life.

Every challenge you face is an opportunity for growth, and every victory, no matter how small, is a testament to your resilience and determination. Embrace the process of striving towards your goals, for it is in the journey that you uncover your true capabilities and inner strength.

Life will present you with various paths, and while the road may be uncertain, hold onto the lessons you've learned, the discipline you've cultivated, and the unwavering belief in yourself. With these, you can overcome obstacles that come your way and navigate towards success with grace and determination.

May this book's inspiration resonate beyond wellness and infuse every aspect of your life with motivation and the courage to reach for your dreams. Know that you have the ability to shape a narrative filled with achievements, growth, and the profound satisfaction of knowing you gave it your all.

CHAPTER 1

THE BREAKING POINT

The early morning sun painted a portrait of hope, washing the world with the soft hues of summer. It cast long, tender fingers of gold and coral through the trees, beckoning life to wake with promises of new beginnings, new adventures, and the mirth of hours yet to come.

The chirping of the birds acted as nature's gentle alarm. From the distant treetops to the eaves of my home, the harmonious chorus reminded me of childhood mornings when time felt endless, and the heart knew no bounds. Each chirp, tweet, and melodious trill carried with it the symphony of life – the rhythm of a world waking up, full of potential and wonder.

As the outside reveled in the dawn's serenity, an ambivalent storm brewed within me and the confines of my room. The glaring digits of the weighing scale screamed at me: 140 kg. The number seemed to mock my very existence, casting a shadow over the golden promise outside. This number was a stark reminder of my battles, of a journey marred with self-doubt, regret, and longing. The cheerful melodies of the birds suddenly seemed distant, their notes clashing with the discordant cacophony of my internal strife.

It was as if the world outside was untouched by the weight of sorrows, while I, weighed down both physically and emotionally,