

# 7 STEPS TO SUCCESS In Deen & Dunya

for Muslim Entrepreneurs,  
Professionals, & Seekers

Maruf Yusuf



Sean Publication Ltd.

# REVIEWS FROM MUSLIM COMMUNITY LEADERS

## **Imam Dr. Mustafa Khattab**

*Translator "The Clear Quran"*

Ustaz Maruf has written a motivational, faith-based guide backed by extensive experience, Islamic insights & profound stories. A must-read for anyone who aspires to achieve their full potential and gain material success in this world and heavenly blessings in the Hereafter.

## **Shelina Janmohamed**

*VP of Islamic Marketing at Ogilvy, Author "Generation M"*

It is an inspiring book that puts purpose at the heart of business success, and how to harness it for real impact. You'll get goosebumps when you read it.

## **Mohammed Qahtani**

*World Champion of Public Speaking, Public speaker*

7 Steps to Success in Deen and Dunya is a simple & easy read with a vivid story to learn from. Maruf did an amazing job taking the reader through this journey.

## **Khalid Parekh**

*AMSYS GROUP, Founder, Chairman & CEO*

A transformative book that teaches Muslim entrepreneurs to view their lives & work through a lens of possibility and abundance, rather than limitation and scarcity. Through inspiring stories and practical steps, Maruf encourages readers to tap into their creativity & unlock their full potential.

## **Na'ima B. Robert**

*Award-winning Author & Book Coach, Sisters Magazine Editor*

I am so excited to finally see a book offering guidance to Muslims on how to profit from the online space - and in line with their purpose and passions, too! The fact that it is written by one of the halal industry's top experts, Maruf Yusuf, makes it even better. A must-read for anyone who has dreamt of starting a business in the digital age.

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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

All praises belongs the One who blessed us with ability to present this valuable book to our honorable readers and peace be upon the last and final messenger Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam.

*Assalamu Alaikum Dear Readers,*

It is with immense joy and anticipation that we present to you "Seven Steps to Success in Deen and Duniya," a comprehensive guidebook designed to illuminate the paths of success in both the spiritual and worldly realms. In a world that often pulls us in different directions, balancing our spiritual well-being with the demands and pursuits of the material world can be a challenging endeavor.

This book, authored by my beloved brother Maruf Yosuf. Maruf received a diversified and practical knowledge throughout his journey of life. As far I know, he is a dedicated expert and a real life practitioner, offers a thoughtful and practical approach to harmonize these two essential aspects of our lives.

The seven steps outlined in this book are not mere theoretical constructs but a roadmap derived from the timeless wisdom found in the teachings of Islam. Each step provides valuable insights, actionable advice, and real-life examples to empower you in your journey towards success and fulfillment.

From enhancing your spiritual connection, nurturing meaningful relationships, and embracing personal growth to managing your finances, time, and health effectively, this book covers a wide array of essential domains. It offers guidance on developing a strong foundation in faith, cultivating resilience, and maintaining a sense of purpose in every aspect of your life.

We encourage you to approach this book with an open heart and a willingness to transform your life positively. Reflect on the wisdom within these pages, apply the principles in your daily life, and witness the profound impact they can have on your spiritual, personal, and professional well-being.

As a publisher, it is our sincere hope that “Seven Steps to Success in Deen and Duniya” becomes a source of inspiration and guidance for you on this transformative journey. May it pave the way for a life filled with success, contentment, and an unwavering connection with both the spiritual and material dimensions of your existence.

Wishing you an enlightening and rewarding reading experience.

Sincerely,

Abu Tasmiya Ahmed Rafique

9/25/2023

# INTRODUCTION

*Assalamu alaykum!*

My name is **Maruf**. Nice to meet you. Thank you for being here.

Right now, you could be watching some cute kittens on YouTube. You could be binging your favorite show on Netflix. Or you could be doing what you usually do to kill time. Actually, time is slowly killing us all.

Yet you are here. I honor you and I honor your time. I will do my best to make sure it is worthwhile, inshaAllah.

You've probably done the things mentioned above over and over. We all have. But they never leave us fulfilled. At the end of the day, something deep inside calls. It calls for something larger than yourself.

*There is a candle in your heart, ready to be kindled. There is a void in your soul, ready to be filled. You feel it, don't you?*

—Rumi

Have you ever wondered why we love stories, especially underdog stories?

For example, how Dawud (AS) overcame Jalut.

Somehow, most people treat reality - our everyday life - as something mundane and boring. So most people escape by "killing time" in the form of alternate realities.

For some, it is drugs and alcohol. For some, it is entertainment. For some, it is something else. Anything but the reality itself.

In this book, we will look into this "broken" reality and see if we missed something. Is there a way to live where

you thrive instead of survive? Is there a way to live so you don't have to escape your everyday life? Is there a way to live so you love what you do and do what you love and make a good living doing that?

Sounds too good to be true? Hold on to this thought. We will come back to this. I feel you. I have been there. I promise it will be worthwhile.

Meanwhile, we have some burning questions to answer.

## **Questions**

Before we get started on our journey, I want to address some of the questions you may be asking, so you know why you should stick with me along this journey.

You may ask yourself: "What is this book all about? Why did this guy write this book? Why should I care or bother reading it? Why now? Who is this guy anyway? Why should I trust him? Will this work? Will this work for me? How do I get started?"

Let's tackle them one by one.

### **What is this book all about?**

This book will help you discover your purpose and your reason for being here in life if you haven't already done so. This book also will help you discover your passion, your flow, and your superpower, inshaAllah. Once you know your purpose and passion, I will help you discover how you can combine these two and serve your Creator by serving people.

If you are sincere in your intention and persistent in your actions in implementing these steps, Allah (SWT) will grant you so much prosperity and blessing that you will thrive instead of survive, inshaAllah.

You will be and act as the main hero in your life story instead of following someone else's life. You will love what

you do. You will love your life even with all of its problems. Your life will never be the same again, inshaAllah.

In a nutshell, this book is about helping you to become the main character in your life story. In other words, it will help you to discover your purpose and passion in life so you follow a path to prosperity - a blissful life with barakah (blessings) so you serve Allah (SWT) in the best way by serving others.

I could keep saying you will be thriving instead of surviving, you will be the main hero in your own story, and you will be in a state of flow, on and on. Instead, let me share a story that will paint this picture more clearly.

### **Story of 3 Builders**

Once upon a time, a traveler was passing by a building. He saw three builders doing the same thing: laying a brick on a wall.

The traveler passes by the first builder and asks him "How is life? What are you doing?" Builder 1 replies: "Man, life is tough. Look at what I am doing! Laying a brick. This job sucks. It doesn't pay well. Life is unfair. I wish I was resting on a beach right now."

The traveler continues and passes by the second builder and asks the same question: "How is life? What are you doing?" Builder 2 replies: "It is ok. We are building a mosque." Then he continues his work.

The traveler continues and passes by the third builder and asks the same question: "How is life? What are you building?" Builder 3 replies: "Life is beautiful. I am part of this beautiful and amazing building project. I love building. We are building a house of Allah SWT where hundreds and maybe thousands of people come and pray every day. I hope My Lord will reward me as long as this masjid is standing because I am helping to seek His pleasure. I'm so blessed, alhamdulillah. You know what? You may not



## STEP 1 ~ PURPOSE

*We did not create the heavens and the earth and everything in between without purpose.*

*Quran 21:16*

If I ask you a simple question 'How is life?', what would your answer be? Usually, there tend to be two different types of answers. Some of you say, 'Life is tough. Life is unfair. Life is cruel.' Others say, 'Life is beautiful. Life is amazing. Life is the best gift.'

Most of the time, the only difference between these groups of people is that the second group discovered their purpose in life and lived it.

*He who has a why to live for can bear with almost any how.*

*– Nietzsche*

I have been on both ends. Growing up, life was tough. Later on, I studied and got a job. Life got easier in a materialistic sense. However, until I found out my why and followed that path, I was not truly experiencing life to the fullest.

### **Have you ever wondered?**

Have you ever wondered: Who am I? Why am I here? What's the purpose of life? What am I supposed to do here? Is there a life after death? Why is there so much suffering in this world?

*The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.*

– Mark Twain

In this book, I will share my journey of how I discovered answers to these questions. Hopefully, you will benefit, inshaAllah.

I could have written this book in a way that proclaims, “This is the Truth. It’s my way or the highway!” But as I get older, I realize that we humans are not rational but rather emotional beings.

*Universe is the greatest love poem ever being written...*

*What verse are you? What metaphor are you?*

*What do you mean?*

– Amir Sulaiman

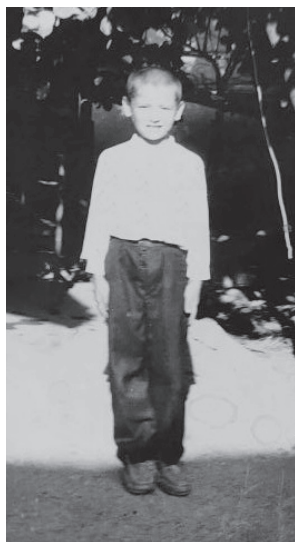
With that in mind, I have decided to write this book as if I am talking to a friend sharing my story instead of preaching. That’s how I’m most comfortable connecting with others anyway. So there will be more questions than answers. There will be dialogues. You are welcome to question everything you read on these pages. If you come across a better answer, please, share it with me.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for being open-minded and open-hearted.

### **Another rags-to-riches story?**

I also could have framed this as a rags-to-riches story about yet another multi-millionaire (at least on paper). But it would be misleading. Now that I am in my 40s and looking back and connecting the dots, I clearly see The Guide guiding me all along the way, alhamdulillah.

So, in a way, this is His story—the one that Allah SWT wrote and that I am grateful to be a part of. That’s why I’m so excited about the story He is writing in your life too.



After doing some research, I discovered that the average balloon price was around one som. I was taken aback by the price difference between wholesale and retail, but it was a pleasant surprise. So, I set the price at one som per balloon and did some quick calculations. To my delight, I realized that if I sold all of my balloons, I would earn 100 soms, despite only spending one som.

I couldn't believe it! I was eager to begin selling.

*At age 7*

### **My first customers**

As soon as I hung up my balloon set, my friends from the street gathered around my booth. All I did was explain how it works, and how they could win the big balloon. The game had started. My friends ran home and begged their moms and dads to win the big balloon.

### **Building on One Idea**

In a mere matter of days, I had sold all of my balloons. I did earn 100 soms. Suddenly, I could afford chewing gums, candies, and whatever I thought was cool at that age just like everyone else. I couldn't believe it at first. It felt like a true miracle. But as I sold more and more balloons, I became more and more confident. I realized that earning enough money for our family to be able to afford extra things was a real possibility. As I was busy selling the balloons, another idea came. Why not sell chewing gum and candies to my customer friends? I knew their parents were already buying these from somewhere every day. Why wouldn't they buy from me?

Guess what I started selling next? :)



*Turkish High School class photo. Mr. Vural is sitting in the first front row.*

*Can you find me in this photo?*

Because it was a boarding school, my classmates from outside the city could stay in the dormitory while the students from the city could go home. Most of my city classmates went back home every day. But I decided to stay.

First, I thought it would be fun for me to spend time with my classmates outside school as well. Most of them were smarter than me. I knew I could learn a thing or two. I knew they studied together, so I joined them.

Secondly, I would save so much time by avoiding the traffic involved in going home and coming back.

Last, but not the least, I would also save my family my travel costs and daily food. So I only visited my family during the weekends.

Dorm life was fun. My new friends and I played soccer and basketball together, but we also studied hard. As we spent day and night together, over the years we developed an extremely strong bond of friendship. I am still friends and in touch with most of them from that period until now, alhamdulillah.

Staying at the dorm with smarter friends and studying hard started showing results. I started climbing up the ranks in our weekly English tests. By the end of that first year, I would be among the best in the class, alhamdulillah. Even Mr. Vural would ask me and other top students to teach and help some of our classmates.

Looking back, I can now connect the dots and see how pivotal that first year, my teachers, my friends at the dorm, and the whole environment at the Turkish gymnasium were in my life journey. The whole experience, especially embracing English, opened many new doors in the future. Even this book you are holding now would not be a possibility if it weren't for that experience.

### **Peer Pressure**

My next target was the university. Everyone was trying to enroll in the most popular and prestigious one: The University of World Economy and Diplomacy. I said to myself: "This is where I am going then."

Now the competition was even higher. You had to aim to be among the top 1,000 students in the country, otherwise, you had to pay an arm and a leg to attend, which I simply couldn't afford.

There was only one problem.

### **Mastering Math**

To enroll in this university, students had to master English, Uzbek, and Math. While I was good in English and Uzbek, I had to master math which I didn't like. At least, I didn't like how it was taught to me at that time.

Yet another teacher, Ulugbek Ustaz (Ustaz means master or teacher in Uzbek), introduced me to Advanced Math and Geometry on another level. I started finally understanding and slowly began to like and eventually love math. Unfortunately, he passed away suddenly in his 40s which