

# Cracking The Code PDF (Limited Copy)

Ayushmann Khurrana



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# **Cracking The Code Summary**

Unlocking the Secrets to Personal and Professional Growth.

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## About the book

In "Cracking the Code," Ayushmann Khurrana invites readers on an inspiring journey through the labyrinth of personal and professional challenges, revealing the secrets to success that lie within each of us. Blending vulnerability with humor, Khurrana shares his own transformative experiences in the Indian entertainment industry, where he navigated self-doubt, rejection, and the pressures of fame. This compelling narrative not only uncovers the emotional truths behind his rise to stardom but also equips readers with practical insights and a roadmap for overcoming their own obstacles. Whether you seek motivation or a deeper understanding of resilience, Khurrana's story resonates with anyone striving to decode their dreams and turn them into reality.

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## About the author

Ayushmann Khurrana is a multifaceted Indian artist celebrated for his contributions to acting, singing, and songwriting, as well as his unique knack for engaging with socially relevant themes in mainstream cinema. Born on September 14, 1984, in Chandigarh, Khurrana's journey began with a background in theatre and music, leading to his notable rise in Bollywood following the success of films like "Vicky Donor" and "Andhadhun." With his charismatic screen presence and a penchant for challenging conventional narratives, he has earned numerous accolades, including several Filmfare Awards. Beyond the silver screen, Khurrana is also known for his lyrical prowess, often infusing his songs with personal stories and insights, making him a prominent voice in contemporary Indian culture.

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# Summary Content List

Chapter 1: 1. Flirting with Fame

Chapter 2: 2. Main Bhi Hero

Chapter 3: 3. Roadie Rathore

Chapter 4: 4. Main Struggler Hoon

Chapter 5: 5. Meri Awaaz Suno

Chapter 6: 6. The 'I' of the Idiot Box

Chapter 7: 7. VJ Ayushmann

Chapter 8: 8. The New 'Anchor' of the Reality Ship

Chapter 9: 9. Ticket to Bollywood

Chapter 10: 10. Life in Cinema Ki Hai Dua

Chapter 11: 11. Bollywood: Still Uncoding

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## Chapter 1 Summary: 1. Flirting with Fame

In Chapter 1 of "Cracking the Code" by Ayushmann Khurrana, the author reflects upon his burgeoning journey into the world of fame, starting with his experience on Channel (V)'s show, **Popstars**, in 2002. At just seventeen, Khurrana found himself amidst the top thirty singers in India, and among three from Chandigarh, thrusting him into the spotlight.

The experience was not merely an audition for him; it was a significant encounter with self-discovery. The auditions took place in a bustling environment at Hotel Mountview, where he felt a reassuring vibe that built his confidence rather than instilling fear. When he sang popular numbers, he ultimately secured a spot for the Mumbai auditions, marking the beginning of his ride into the competitive music scene. Despite initial thrill, he remained aware of his lack of pure passion for singing compared to others like Neeti Mohan, recognizing it as part of his broader artistic journey.

Khurana emphasizes the importance of being open to experiences, considering himself like a sponge, eager to absorb everything Mumbai and music had to offer. This philosophy helped him in managing the whirlwind of emotions and challenges during the intense competition. Acknowledging his nerves, he made every effort to enjoy the journey without letting the pressure of expectations overwhelm him, avoiding the pitfalls of excessive self-congratulation.





Throughout **Popstars**, he encountered a motley group of contestants and forged friendships, each bringing their unique talents and aspirations. The contrasting emotions among contestants underscored the diversity of passions in the competitive space, with Khurrana noting the importance of maintaining genuine relationships, particularly with those who embraced his authentic self.

Transitioning from this chapter of his life, he acknowledges the unfamiliarity of fame and the trials it presents. Particularly enlightening was the realization of his own vulnerability; he was tempted to indulge in the attention that surrounded him, but ultimately chose to honor commitments and remain grounded.

As Khurrana navigated these waters, he learned a vital lesson during the selection process; while he may have tasted a semblance of fame, true passion lay elsewhere—specifically in the arts and acting. Following his rejection from **Popstars**, he pursued theatre with earnestness and developed his craft.

This chapter reveals two essential codes for readers. **Code #1** emphasizes valuing authentic relationships that persist beyond superficial validation, reflecting that self-acceptance is crucial to success. **Code #2** encourages recognizing one's path in life, understanding when to pivot and adapt while





closely monitoring personal growth.

By the end of the chapter, Khurrana's reflection transcends mere gossip about initial fame—he sets a poignant tone about choices, authenticity, and the emotional roller coaster of pursuing one's dreams. His initial flirtation with fame ends not only with entertaining anecdotes but with substantial personal growth, setting the stage for his journey ahead.

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# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Valuing Authentic Relationships

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine standing at the cusp of a thrilling journey, much like Ayushmann Khurrana did during his early days on 'Popstars.' You may feel the weight of expectations pressing down on you, but the lesson here is profound: it's not just about reaching for fame or accolades, but about the genuine connections you nurture along the way. As you pursue your dreams, remember to forge relationships that enrich your life, providing comfort and authenticity amidst the chaos. These bonds will ground you when the spotlight feels overwhelming, and they remind you of who you truly are. Like Khurrana, absorb the wisdom from every shared laugh and challenge, knowing that success is sweeter when celebrated with those who appreciate the real you. In this intricate dance of ambition, let authentic friendships be your compass, guiding you through moments of triumph and self-discovery.

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## Chapter 2 Summary: 2. Main Bhi Hero

In the second chapter of Ayushmann Khurrana's "Cracking the Code," titled "Main Bhi Hero," the author navigates his journey from the initial wave of fame to a deeper self-exploration and realization of his true passions. After gaining recognition from participating in the singing competition Popstars, he discovered his love for theatre, joining DAV College's theatre team, Aaghaaz. Despite his father's stereotypical perceptions of a theatre artist, Khurrana continued his passion in secret, embodying the spirit of rebellion necessary for artistic pursuits. He reflects on the importance of having a genuine passion when being a non-conformist, cautioning against rebelling for causes that lack true significance.

As he transitioned from high school, Khurrana faced societal pressures to choose a career path between medicine and engineering, ultimately opting for dentistry. However, the realization that he lacked an aptitude for medicine led him to switch his focus towards the arts, where he excelled and received numerous accolades for his performance skills. This period of self-reflection was crucial, teaching him the importance of recognizing one's own talents versus societal expectations, ultimately guiding him to prioritize his passion for acting.

Moving to Mumbai, Khurrana interacts with various aspirants in the film industry, sharing insights on the often naïve expectations many hold about



becoming stars. He acknowledges that while everyone believes in their potential, a dose of reality and self-introspection is vital to avoid futile pursuits. He recounts stories of friends who have struggled for years in the industry, emphasizing that despite having talent, success is not guaranteed, highlighting both the need for talent and the role of destiny in career pathways.

Throughout his reflection, Khurrana emphasizes that sometimes it is essential to let go of certain aspirations and embrace new opportunities. He cites his diverse experiences in different roles, from being a radio jockey to a video jockey, underscoring the idea that one's journey in life can take many forms, and preparation in one's field can help in unexpected ways.

His college experiences are vibrant and revealing, capturing the essence of youthful ardor and the learning curves that accompany stepping outside one's comfort zone. The play performances and competitions serve as milestones in his personal development, leading to moments of both elation and humility. The bond with his theatre troupe is highlighted, with humorous anecdotes enriching the narrative, showcasing camaraderie and growth throughout these formative years.

In conclusion, Khurrana encapsulates his philosophy of recognizing and honoring one's path in life, while stressing the importance of staying true to one's passions. He imparts a lesson on pragmatism mixed with idealism,



urging young people to remain grounded and reflective, ensuring that their pursuits align with both personal aspirations and real capabilities.

Key observations and takeaways from this chapter include:

1. **Passion and Rebellion:** Engaging in pursuits that resonate with one's soul can legitimize rebellion against conventional expectations.
2. **Aptitude and Realism:** Recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses is critical in charting a career path.
3. **Destiny and Hard Work:** Acknowledging the intricate dance between destiny and effort in achieving success informs a balanced perspective.
4. **Value of Experience:** Every experience, no matter how trivial, holds a lesson and contributes to personal growth.
5. **Authenticity:** Being true to oneself fosters genuine connections and success, while pretentiousness leads to disconnection and failure.

In "Main Bhi Hero," Khurrana's journey becomes a relatable narrative that encourages readers to pursue their unique paths while remaining adaptable to the lessons that life unfurls.



## Chapter 3: 3. Roadie Rathore

In 2005, Ayushmann Khurrana recalls his transformative experience with MTV Roadies while pursuing his master's degree in mass communication and journalism. Initially an unassuming participant with a unique blend of comedy and talent, Ayushmann's journey started with an unexpected audition call from Raghu, a key figure who later became a pivotal mentor in his life. Fueled by his father's encouragement, he took a leap of faith into the world of reality television, despite his initial reservations about its relevance to his acting aspirations.

His time on Roadies was marked by a mix of challenges and opportunities for personal growth. He realized that success on the show was dictated more by personality than physical prowess, as Raghu selected contestants based on charm, eccentricity, and humor rather than mere strength. Throughout the grueling forty-day experience, he shifted from a detached observer to an integral participant, allowing his authentic self to shine through.

Ayushmann faced various daunting challenges during the show, including

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## Chapter 4 Summary: 4. Main Struggler Hoon

In the fourth chapter of "Cracking the Code," Ayushmann Khurrana recounts the tumultuous journey from the completion of his postgraduate studies to entering the competitive realm of Mumbai's entertainment industry.

- 1. Transition to Mumbai:** Ayushmann reflects on the bittersweet end of university life, filled with aspirations and plans for personal development. However, these plans take an unexpected turn when his father, based on astrological calculations, pushes him to pursue his dreams in Mumbai immediately. This leads to a poignant farewell with his girlfriend, Tahira, filled with uncertainties about their future and his career as an aspiring actor.
- 2. Initial Challenges:** Upon arriving in Mumbai, he faces immediate challenges in accommodation, first staying with a friend and then sneaking into a medical college hostel, where he enjoys the camaraderie of medical students. This sets the tone for a new adventurous chapter in his life as he experiences the vibrancy of hostel life while pursuing theatrical endeavors.
- 3. Exploration of Interests:** Determined to break into Bollywood despite initial rejections, Ayushmann attends various auditions while also exploring opportunities in radio. His self-awareness leads him to pursue a career in radio jockeying (RJing) at Big FM, understanding that it serves as a stepping stone to his acting aspirations.



**4. Dedication and Growth:** While juggling his commitments at Big FM, he immerses himself in each experience, diligently preparing for his Radio shows. His foundation is built on discipline, hard work, and the relentless pursuit of improvement. This discipline pays off, as he gradually earns recognition and respect in the industry, culminating in a pivotal call that transitions him to the morning breakfast show, making his voice prominent across Delhi.

**5. Persistence and Opportunity:** Ayushmann emphasizes the importance of seizing opportunities—his willingness to fill in for a sick colleague leads to a significant breakthrough. This moment underscores his belief in always being prepared to embrace new chances, a principle he refers to as "NEVER LET GO OF AN OPPORTUNITY."

**6. Supportive Relationships:** Throughout his time at Big FM, he discusses the relationships he builds with colleagues, particularly his producer Rani, who becomes both a friend and professional ally. Their partnership exemplifies the power of teamwork and how supportive colleagues can facilitate success.

**7. Struggles with Personal Life:** Balancing work and maintaining a long-distance relationship with Tahira proves difficult, particularly when surrounded by a fast-paced city life filled with temptations and distractions.



He struggles with assumptions made about his character based on his career choice, but resolves to remain faithful and focused on his ambitions.

**8. Public Engagement and Celebrity Interaction:** Ayushmann reflects on the unique experiences of interviewing celebrities as a radio host. His nervousness and eagerness to impress lead to both memorable and embarrassing moments, reinforcing the unpredictable nature of working in entertainment.

**9. Career Realization:** After two years at Big FM, despite the draining nature of the job, he recognizes it is time to take a leap of faith back to Mumbai to pursue acting full-time. Amidst doubts from colleagues about his decision, he remains resolute, believing in his talent and potential.

Throughout this chapter, Ayushmann's journey is characterized by determination, resilience, and a commitment to personal growth, all while navigating the complexities of life and career in the vibrant, challenging landscape of the entertainment industry. The principles woven throughout his narrative highlight the importance of preparation, seizing opportunities, and staying true to oneself amidst external pressures.



# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Never Let Go of an Opportunity

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine standing at a crossroads where every decision can alter your future. Ayushmann's story emphasizes the magnetic pull of seizing opportunities, a lesson that resonates deeply with our lives. When he filled in for a colleague on a whim, it transformed his entire career trajectory, a reminder that sometimes the most significant breakthroughs arise from spontaneous choices. As you navigate your own path, let this principle inspire you: every challenge or unexpected chance could lead you to a place you never imagined possible. Embrace each moment with open arms and an eager heart, for in the tapestry of life, it is often the opportunities you pursue that shape your destiny.

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## Chapter 5 Summary: 5. Meri Awaaz Suno

In Chapter 5 of "Cracking the Code," Ayushmann Khurrana shares his transformative journey as a Radio Jockey (RJ) in Delhi, where he navigates the challenges of the competitive entertainment industry while pursuing his lifelong dream of becoming an actor. Initially landing the highest-paid RJ position at Big 92.7 FM, Khurrana enjoyed early success with his evening show, which quickly became popular. However, he aimed for the more prestigious morning show, known as the breakfast show.

- 1. Embrace Opportunities:** An unexpected late-night call from the station head led Khurrana to seize a chance to fill in for a sick jockey, which ultimately secured him the breakfast show "Big Chai." His responsiveness to this opportunity taught him the importance of never letting opportunities slip by.
- 2. Daily Commitment:** Treating every workday as if it could be his last, Khurrana's dedication saw his show rise to one of Delhi's top three. Despite the immense pressure from superiors and the intense demands of live broadcasting, he maintained strong relationships with colleagues, particularly with his producers, who helped alleviate some of the stress.
- 3. Maintain Professional Relationships:** Khurrana vividly describes his interactions with colleagues, including light-hearted moments with a female



senior who showed interest in him and his bond with producer Rani, who played a crucial role in shaping his early career. He humorously recounts how his aunt questioned his career choices, reflecting the disconnect between his passion for radio and his family's traditional views.

**4. Networking with Caution:** Throughout his radio days, he navigated the world of his fans—some of whom were merely seeking contests and prizes. One devoted fan would bring him sweets every week, inspiring him to share his food desires on air, which worked to engage listeners.

**5. Building Resilience:** Khurrana endured daunting work schedules and even managed to find rest at the office, showcasing his determination. After two draining years at Big FM, he decided to take the leap towards his ultimate aspiration to act, despite skepticism from his colleagues.

**6. Seize Every Moment:** Transitioning to pursuing acting, he balanced multiple jobs and found fulfillment in his work at MTV, where he truly thrived. His unexpected opportunities reminded him of the importance of investing in every moment, believing that past actions shape future prospects.

**7. Set Your Standards:** Khurrana emphasizes the need to aspire for greater things once you have proven yourself, guiding readers to recognize when they have outgrown their current roles. This mentality fostered his



growth, leading to more significant roles and higher-profile projects.

**8. Chart Your Course:** Reflecting on the tumultuous yet rewarding path, Khurrana learned that life in the entertainment industry is filled with ups and downs, but perseverance and commitment to one's craft are crucial.

**9. Value Your Experience:** He recalls specific incidents filled with humor and embarrassment, such as awkward celebrity interviews that taught him to embrace mistakes and build resilience.

In essence, this chapter illustrates Khurrana's rise from a hopeful RJ to an aspiring actor, emphasizing the codes of seizing opportunities, embracing daily challenges, and aspiring for growth while remaining committed to one's dreams. Each encounter and experience shaped his unique journey, revealing that personal and professional growth is achieved through resilience and undeterred passion.

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## Chapter 6: 6. The ‘I’ of the Idiot Box

In Chapter 6 of "Cracking the Code," Ayushmann Khurrana shares a compelling narrative of his early experiences in the television and entertainment industry, detailing both struggles and triumphs that shaped his career.

**1. Navigating Choices:** Ayushmann recounts his time as a second lead in the Balaji serial "Qayamat," noting how he felt trapped in minor roles before obtaining a lead role in "Ek Thi Rajkumari." Despite the allure of immediate money, he refused to sign a three-year contract that compromised his future, illustrating his priority on personal growth over financial security.

**2. Understanding Interests Over Relationships:** The experience impacted his perspective on the industry, echoing a crucial lesson imparted by his father-in-law: "There are no permanent friends or permanent foes, only permanent interests." This understanding became vital as he faced threats of career sabotage from the Balaji team after leaving the show.

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## Chapter 7 Summary: 7. VJ Ayushmann

As a novice VJ at MTV, Ayushmann Khurrana faced significant challenges during the initial phases of his career. His first experience shooting for the pilot of Wassup involved an autorickshaw race, which was so poorly executed that the episode was never aired. This was just the beginning of his struggles; during his first studio shoot, he struggled to read from the teleprompter, causing his producer, Tanvi Gandhi, to panic about the potential impact on her career. Despite the rocky start and feelings of inadequacy, Ayushmann gradually started to connect with the audience and gain momentum as a studio anchor.

1. Growth Through Adversity: Initially rejected for his Hindi language, which was deemed 'uncool', Ayushmann evolved by observing his peers and integrating Hinglish into his scripts, effectively bridging his cultural roots with the evolving media landscape. This adaptability was crucial, as MTV transitioned into a more Hindi-centric channel just as he mastered the language of his craft.

2. The Value of Criticism: Throughout his career at MTV, he faced ridicule and was often overlooked, including not being featured on the channel's website for six months. Negative experiences, including harsh criticisms from industry peers, including a particularly detrimental incident at a press conference, taught him the importance of resilience and learning from



feedback. Embracing criticism, he believes, is essential for growth.

3. The Importance of Understanding Industry Dynamics: Ayushmann acknowledges the significance of being aware of business norms when negotiating for projects. His experience securing a role in the Indian Premier League (IPL) helped him break free from the expectations set by MTV, allowing him to maneuver his way into more lucrative opportunities.

4. Striking a Balance Between Art and Commerce: His early projects, like Music Ka Maha Muqabla, revealed the harsh realities of reality television, such as predetermined outcomes designed to drive ratings. This led him to recognize that success on these shows could be fleeting.

5. Embracing New Challenges: When offered a role in India's Got Talent, Ayushmann faced a dilemma. He had to choose between the comfort of a known franchise and the uncertainty that came with joining a new show. Ultimately, he chose the latter, realizing that stepping outside his comfort zone was necessary for growth.

6. Sustainable Success in Reality TV: Ayushmann highlights the transience of fame achieved through reality shows. While contestants often think they have secured a future in the spotlight, the reality is that many fade into obscurity post-show. He urges aspirants to recognize that success is not guaranteed and that continual effort and reinvention are vital.



7. Transformational Experiences: His tenure on Just Dance was pivotal, as it garnered him respect within the industry and ultimately led to his casting in Vicky Donor. This highlights the importance of seizing opportunities and making the most of each experience.

8. Wisdom in Learning: Ayushmann concludes with the ethos that learning from others' experiences is an invaluable tool. Being more than just a reality show contestant is essential for achieving long-term recognition and respect in the entertainment industry.

In summary, Ayushmann Khurrana's journey emphasizes the importance of resilience, adaptability, and the continuous pursuit of growth in the face of challenges. His experiences serve as a roadmap for aspiring artists navigating the complexities of the entertainment industry.

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## Chapter 8 Summary: 8. The New ‘Anchor’ of the Reality Ship

The new wave of non-fiction shows was rapidly transforming television, with Ayushmann Khurrana emerging as one of the pioneers in hosting both MTV and general entertainment reality shows. He faced a pivotal moment when he was offered the opportunity to host "India's Got Talent" (IGT) and the Indian Premier League (IPL) simultaneously. Despite his preference for IGT, financial negotiations led him to choose IPL first, subsequently leveraging that experience to negotiate a separate compensation for hosting IGT.

Hosting IPL was a high-pressure learning experience, starkly contrasted by the joy he found in IGT. He excelled during auditions, connecting with audiences through his spontaneity and comedic improvisations while solidifying his place as the constant amidst a rotating cast of co-hosts. His partnership with co-host Nikhil Chinnappa flourished, as they balanced English and Hindi, strengthening their on-screen chemistry. Travel and experience alongside Nikhil enriched Ayushmann's learning, enhancing his understanding of professional etiquette and cultural diversity.

Following successful seasons of IGT, Ayushmann faced a crucial decision between continuing with a familiar franchise or stepping into the larger, more daunting realm of "Just Dance." Aware of Hrithik Roshan's



overshadowing presence in the latter, he opted to take the risk, negotiating unprecedented terms and solidifying his individuality in a vast ensemble. The experience not only built his confidence but also marked the first time he was viewed as a celebrity, with enthusiastic reception during auditions across cities, including New York, where he engaged with the Indian diaspora.

This exposure revealed the often exaggerated nature of reality television, where contestants were fed false hopes of stardom. Ayushmann cautioned aspiring contestants to remain grounded, recognizing the competitive landscape where many, like himself, were merely characters within a fleeting season's narrative. Reflecting on their experiences, he emphasized the necessity of sustained individual effort beyond momentary fame.

Despite the victories gained from "Just Dance," Ayushmann acknowledged the disparity between contestants' temporary triumphs and the television network's lasting benefits. His success elevated him within the industry, ultimately leading to a pivotal opportunity in his acting career.

Transitioning to his cinematic debut with "Vicky Donor," Ayushmann reflected on how earlier rejections shaped his path. Initially not the first choice for the role, his perseverance and standout personality ultimately attracted the attention of the film's director, Shoojit Sircar. The film's unconventional subject matter reflected a significant moment in his career,





as he embraced the charm of his character and contributed creatively.

Even amidst public acclaim, personal challenges loomed. Ayushmann's newfound fame introduced complexities in his marriage, creating a disconnect between him and his wife, Tahira. The overwhelming attention tested their relationship, emphasizing the necessity for white-space amid successes. He became aware of prioritizing time for family, recognizing the joy in personal bonds, despite the career whirlwind.

Through his journey in "Vicky Donor," Ayushmann developed a strong foundation rooted in honesty and collaboration, even during moments of self-doubt. He cherished the cinematic process while navigating the complexities of newfound fame, ultimately solidifying the importance of emotional connectivity in his life.

His subsequent project, "Nautanki Saala," introduces contrasts in expectations versus reality, yielding lessons in patience and discernment. Ayushmann divulged the importance of thorough communication and clarity in the creative process, stressing that understanding the essence of a project could save potential missteps in decision-making.

1. Understanding financial norms within the industry is crucial to avoid being undervalued.
2. Stepping outside of one's comfort zone can lead to personal growth and



new opportunities.

3. Authenticity and creativity enhance host-audience engagement.

4. Reality television can present a distorted view of success; wisdom must guide participants.

5. Personal relationships must adapt amidst public fame; prioritize emotional bonds.

6. Learning from past rejections and experiences enriches future opportunities.

7. Open communication and understanding in project selections can mitigate misalignments.

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## Chapter 9: 9. Ticket to Bollywood

In the journey of his budding career in Bollywood, Ayushmann Khurrana recounts how "Vicky Donor" became his crucial entry point into the film industry. The opportunity to audition for the film came to him almost serendipitously after his earlier works, such as "Just Dance", drew attention to his talent. Although initially, big names like Vivek Oberoi and Sharman Joshi were considered for the lead role, a shift in decision led to Khurrana being offered the part, aided by the casting director Jogi's lasting impression from a previous audition.

Reflecting on past rejections, including a failed audition for "Teen The Bhai" and a side role in "I Hate Love Stories," Ayushmann emphasizes a key principle: missed opportunities often make way for better ones. His journey took a turn after being cast as Vicky in "Vicky Donor," a film addressing the taboo subject of sperm donation, directed by Shoojit Sircar. Khurrana recalls how despite feeling lost and underconfident during filming, again exemplifying the importance of trusting an experienced director's vision, the film released to monumental success, catapulting him into the limelight.

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## Chapter 10 Summary: 10. Life in Cinema Ki Hai Dua

In times of solitude, Ayushmann Khurrana reflects on his journey as an actor, realizing that while he always aspired to this dream, he never anticipated the complexities that would arise along the way. Just as in a traditional Punjabi wedding, where the guest list extends beyond close family to include many acquaintances, his ascent in the film industry has brought with it a mix of genuine supporters and those seeking a quick connection for personal gain. He sometimes feels overwhelmed by public scrutiny and rumors, notably a ridiculous one about his death that shocked his family.

**1. The Burden of Fame:** Ayushmann discusses the challenges that come with newfound fame, including unwanted attention from opportunists and gossipers who misinterpret his experiences and public persona. He navigates these distractions while acknowledging their inevitability in the life of a celebrity.

**2. A Pivotal Opportunity:** A watershed moment occurs when he is offered a three-film deal with Yash Raj Films (YRF), a dream association that every aspiring actor covets. Despite initial misgivings about the scripts, he chooses to seize the opportunity, indicating the significance of reputation in the film industry.





**3. Resilience Through Failure:** The lukewarm reception of his film "Bewakoofiyaan" serves as a critical learning experience. He reflects deeply on the essence of filmmaking, emphasizing the importance of passion and instinct over external expectations or peer pressure. He recognizes that real growth often emerges from failure.

**4. Navigating Choices:** Ayushmann underscores the inevitable randomness in film production — how many projects are born not from artistic intent but from commercial calculations. He acknowledges that while he personally cannot take any film lightly, many in the industry do.

**5. Coexistence in the Industry:** The camaraderie he witnesses among contemporary actors — a departure from competitive negativity — suggests a shift towards mutual respect and support. Ayushmann expresses admiration for how actors can bridge creative differences while still focusing on their own paths.

**6. Self-Awareness as Key:** He emphasizes the importance of self-awareness: knowing one's strengths and weaknesses, which can foster comfort and confidence in one's choices. This acceptance allows for advisable risks in an evolving industry where collaboration can enhance creativity.

**7. Philosophy of Giving Back:** He concludes with an introspective



perspective on success; it's not about personal gain but about giving back to the universe and acknowledging the journey. His reflections link to the idea that self-honesty is crucial in both personal fulfillment and professional success.

Through Ayushmann Khurrana's insights, the chapter crystallizes themes of ambition, resilience, and self-growth in the midst of the chaotic film industry, inspiring readers to pursue their passions while remaining grounded and true to themselves. His journey is a testament to the ongoing process of 'cracking the code' in both life and career, emphasizing that true success lies in our emotional equilibrium and the impact we have on others.

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# Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Self-Awareness as Key

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine standing at a crossroads, where each path represents a choice in your life, be it career, relationships, or personal growth. Ayushmann Khurrana's journey invites you to pause and reflect on your strengths and weaknesses, illuminating the idea that self-awareness is your guiding star. By understanding who you are and what truly drives you, you can navigate the complexities of life with greater confidence and authenticity. Embrace this inner wisdom, and it will empower you to make decisions that align with your true self, while also encouraging you to take risks that can lead to extraordinary growth. In a world filled with distractions and societal pressures, your self-awareness becomes the compass that guides you through the chaos, reminding you that the most significant journey is not just about success, but about being true to who you are as you carve your path through life.

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## Chapter 11 Summary: 11. Bollywood: Still Uncoding

In Chapter 11 of "Cracking the Code," Ayushmann Khurrana reflects on his experience attending a special screening of his film "Bewakoofiyaan." From the onset, he grapples with a profound discontent, feeling that the film did not meet his expectations and lacked the grandeur of typical Yash Raj Films productions that he had always admired. Despite receiving praise from peers, he felt disconnected and numb, eventually retreating home to contemplate the significance of his career choices.

**1. Trusting Your Instincts** Khurrana emphasizes the importance of believing in one's instincts when selecting film projects. He acknowledges that the script is the cornerstone of filmmaking, and he regrets not having acted solely based on his conviction as opposed to external influences.

**2. Learning from Failure:** Reflecting on his journey, Khurrana recognizes that despite the lukewarm response to "Bewakoofiyaan," he gained invaluable lessons from his failures. He cites Emily Dickinson's poetry to illustrate that true understanding often comes from the absence of success, underscoring his realization that life's challenges are integral to growth.

**3. The State of Bollywood:** Khurrana observes the randomness behind film productions, where many projects come to life due to arbitrary reasons,



such as star availability or personal motivations of the producers. However, he highlights the passion of a few filmmakers as a shining exception amidst the chaos.

**4. The Weight of Choices:** He delves into the sentiment that cinema should not be taken lightly. Each project he chooses reflects his earnest effort and dedication, asserting that he aspires for his work to be meaningful, even if that significance is modest. His upcoming biopic, "Hawaaizaada," becomes a point of pride as he believes in its potential to fulfill its promises.

**5. Diverse Scripts and Interpretations:** Fun anecdotes about the varying responses scripts receive elucidate how different filmmakers would interpret the same material according to their sensibilities. This not only highlights the diversity of filmmaking within Bollywood but also emphasizes the individuality of artists.

**6. Camaraderie in the Industry:** Khurrana praises the evolving environment among actors who now appreciate each other's works. The emergence of a 'mutual admiration society' contrasts the competitive landscape of the past and emphasizes a collective commitment to filmmaking.

**7. Focus on Craft Over Grudges:** He urges fellow actors to prioritize improving their craft over harboring jealousy toward others' successes. In



an increasingly egalitarian industry, he posits that one's worth is judged by their latest work and emphasizes maintaining a positive outlook.

**8. Self-Acceptance:** Khurrana admits that a critical aspect of his journey involves understanding his strengths and weaknesses. He acknowledges that not every role suits him and expresses his desire to remain true to himself, highlighting the importance of being comfortable in one's own skin.

**9. Personal Growth and Reflection:** Offering a broader philosophical perspective, he concludes that success relies on both self-awareness and the ability to return to one's core values. He asserts the significance of giving back to the community and cherishing personal growth over accumulation.

With a mix of self-reflection, industry commentary, and encouragement, Ayushmann Khurrana provides readers with insights into his personal and professional journey, all the while nudging them to find their own paths amidst the complexities of life and career. The chapter ends on a hopeful note, inviting future reflections on the lessons learned from 'cracking the code' in the world of cinema.

