

# UHNW

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## **THE GRANDSON OF** the man considered to be one of **DUBAI'S FOUNDING FATHERS**

Exclusive interview with  
Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg

## **CAVALLERIA TOSCANA**

Exclusive interview with  
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## **THE ORBITAL PERSPECTIVE**

Exclusive interview with former  
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## **ROLLS-ROYCE SPECTRE**

The first fully electric Rolls-Royce

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The latest trends

## **YOUR DREAM HOUSE IS A TREEHOUSE**

9,95 Euro . English



## Re-defining the world of healthcare

*The grandson of the man considered to be one of Dubai's founding fathers, and the son of the most powerful woman in the Middle East, Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg is unlocking human potential using the science of tomorrow. After recovering and healing from stroke, paralysis, active cancer markers, depression and life-threatening conditions, Abdulla became the ambassador of a unique advanced humanised solution with a vision to help others all around the globe.*

Established in the 18th century as a small fishing village, Dubai became the most populous city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The city that is having the second most five-star hotels and the tallest buildings in the world is focusing mainly on tourism and luxury. Similarly to the Principality of Monaco, the city of Dubai has one of the world's lowest violent crime rates and in 2019 was ranked the seventh safest city in the world.

Many theories have been proposed as to the origin of the word "Dubai". One theory suggests the word used to be the souq in Ba. An Arabic proverb says "Daba Dubai" (Arabic: يبد ابد), meaning "They came with a lot of money."

Oil revenue indeed helped accelerate the development of the city, but despite the common belief, oil is not the only source of incomes. Oil production contributed less than 2 percent of the Emirate's



GDP in 2018. Dubai has one of the world's fastest-growing economies, yet it strongly relies on revenues from trade, tourism, aviation, real estate, and financial services.

The development of Dubai is clearly visible as in 1822 it had 700–800 residents, while today the city has a population of around 3.49 million.



*The view of Dubai Creek*



*Artificial Archipelagos in Dubai*

### **The Al Gurg family**

One of Dubai's native residents is Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg whose family is nothing but inspirational, as Abdulla's late grandfather was the Honourable Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg, the former UAE Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

Abdulla's mother, Dr. Raja Al Gurg is the most powerful woman in the Middle East for the last three years.

Having learnt the business from his late grandfather, Abdulla is now holding positions as the Executive Chairman of the Single-Family Office, Abdulla Al Gurg Global Investments (AGGI), and is the Director of Board of Advisors to - and a member of - the Board of Directors for Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group (ESAG), consisting of 27 companies. He also leads and manages the Group's private investments and joint venture relationships.

Was Dubai different when you were a young child?

"Oh yes, it was very different and simple," - starts Abdulla. - "We used to enjoy small and simple things, like cycling outside in the streets.

We used to buy chips which was still under one dollar. I also remember that our doors were more open to the outside world. I safeguard a lot of nice memories."

How would you describe Dubai back then, was it more family-oriented?

"I had a very normal childhood which I am not sure my children have now, as Dubai has advanced a lot since then.

It is definitely different now but it still offers a lot to children. The city went through a great evolution just as many big cities in countries all around the world."



*Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg*





*Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg honoured with the Order of Zayed II by Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the late former President of the United Arab Emirates, in 1997.*



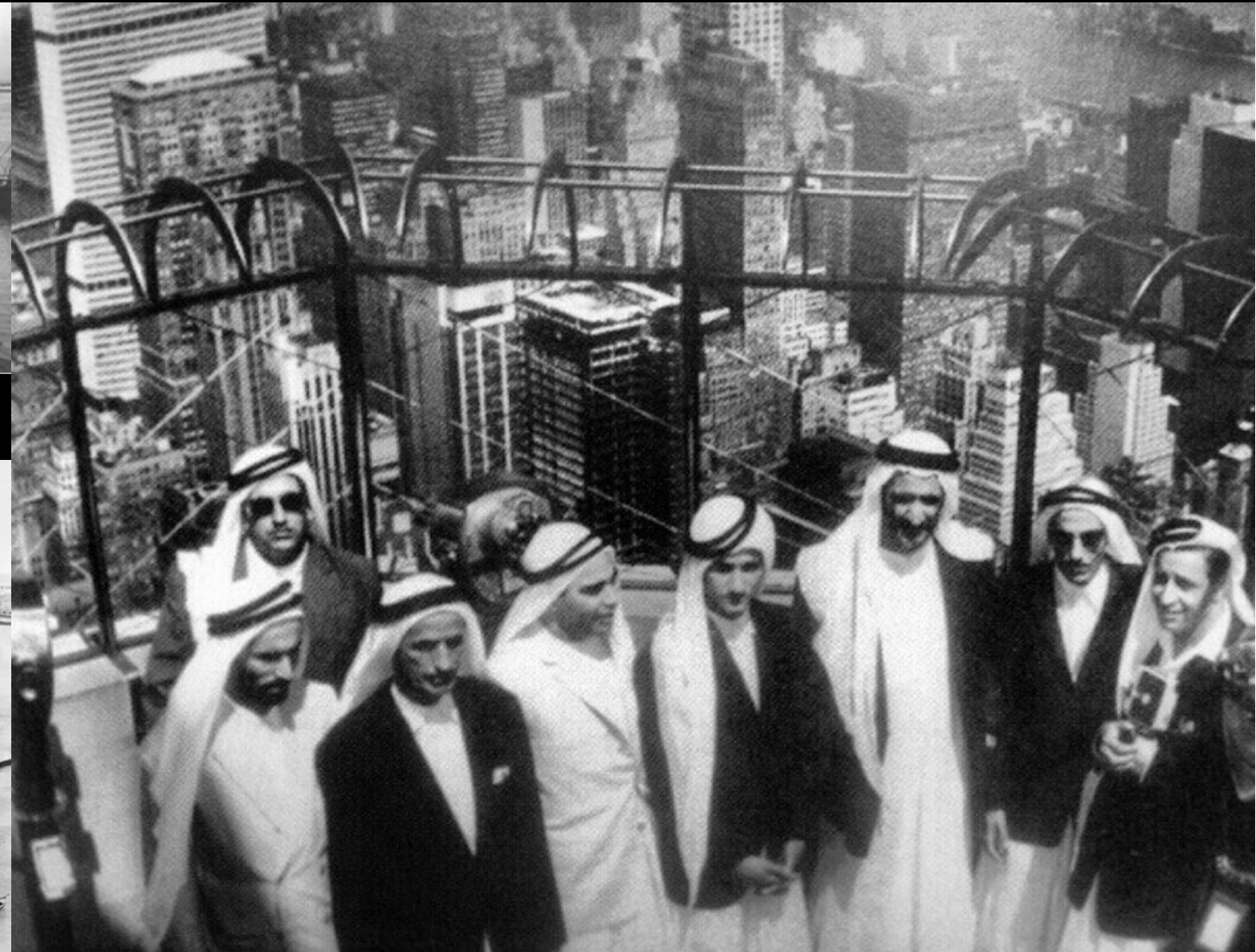
*Honourable Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg with Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Vice-President and second Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai.*



*Dubai Creek in 1964.*



*AlRas Deira in the mid 1960s.*



*Honourable Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg, the grandfather of Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg is standing at the top of New York's Empire State Building in 1960s.*

**"A diver thinking of sharks  
will never get pearls."  
- Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg**

The great development and modernisation of the city of Dubai started when Honourable Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg, the grandfather of Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg, His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum and his late father Shaikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum visited New York's Empire State building, the tallest building in the 1960s.

As His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum remembered, "It was a beginning of a dream that turned into a reality in Dubai".

The skyscrapers of New York reflected their dreams for the future of Dubai to build the tallest building structures in the world. The Burj Khalifa now is officially the tallest with 828 metres (2,717 ft) height.





ESAG Chairman, HE Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg joined HSBC in 1946, he became senior advisor to Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum. In 2014, he was awarded 'first banker' award for his efforts to serve the UAE by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

Being part of these developments, Honourable Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg became one of modern Dubai's founding fathers.

Did you have pressure and responsibilities growing up to take over one day the family business?

"Our family was very structured, therefore, we were educated from the very beginning to be part of the family business. You know, my uncles, as well as my mother, were in the business before. So, at some point, I always knew in the back of my mind that one day I will have to be part of the business too. That was my destiny but back then as a child, I tried to always avoid these questions, and everything happened in its own way."

Abdulla earned his Bachelor's Degree in marketing and management from the American University of Sharjah, after graduating from the Dubai National School. He also holds a Master's degree in management from Regis University, Denver, Colorado.

Abdulla's family decided to let him prove himself and cut his teeth outside Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, and he started to work in different companies to gain more experience and try his wings. His first job was in the sales department of a call center at Tejari.com, an e-commerce hub in Dubai. After that, he served as the Executive Project Director of Tiger Woods Project in Dubai for over three years.

Do you play golf on a regular base?

"I never played golf, but I'd like to. A serious lower back injury stopped me, well, until now, as that back injury got healed! I was in the right place at the right time when Tiger Woods Dubai started. I believe that things that are meant to happen will eventually happen in our life. I was very grateful to have their interest and trust in me, as well as my leadership."

Did you play or take part in any sports activities in your life?

"I was always active, but mainly fitness and gym oriented. I did daily gym routines to keep my body fit and healthy."

For some time, Abdulla lived between Dubai and London taking care of and expanding the family real estate portfolio developments, growing it from almost nothing to over USD 2 billion. In recognition of the family foundation's - the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Charity Foundation's - charitable efforts, Abdulla was appointed as the Lloyds TSB Torchbearer for the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay.

Your mother is one of the most powerful women in the Middle East and your grandfather the Honourable Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg was considered one of the founding fathers of Dubai.



Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg as the Lloyds TSB Torchbearer for the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay.



Tiger Woods and Abdulla Fareed Al Gurg.

"My grandfather taught me how to be tough, how to be structured and disciplined.

On the other hand, my mother taught me how to be inclusive and how to think for everyone, not just for myself."

Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg was awarded CBE (Commander in the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in 1990 and honoured with the Order of Zayed II by Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the late former President of the United Arab Emirates, in 1997.

Such an inspirational background, which one of them inspired you the most?

"I have learnt different things from both of them.

My grandfather taught me how to be tough, how to be structured and disciplined. I was very interested to learn all this from him. He also taught me how to deal with other high society members, which I could not have learnt alone. On the other hand, my mother taught me how to be inclusive and how to think for everyone, not just for myself."

What was your first role in the family business?

"I started as the General Manager at the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group back in October 2009."



## New ambitions gave rise to the darkest moments

Abdulla is the third generation in the main family business, the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, which has been in business for over six decades. He quickly experienced that working in the Government sector is very different than working in the private sector. The Government has always the right, while in the private sector you can question and challenge yourself.

In his role as the Group CEO, Abdulla expanded Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group's footprint in the GCC region; in the Sultanate of Oman, Iraq, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Within Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, he focused on business process engineering and optimisation with an emphasis on developing technology that intelligently manages and empowers the supply chain.

Abdulla has also led the activation of a Treasury Management System, helping establish the first inhouse Bank in the GCC region. But for his hard work, he paid a high toll. Under the pressure to navigate through the 27 companies, Abdulla took everything hard and personally in the family business.

"It felt like everything is very personal. It is very difficult for many people to disconnect themselves from business, especially if it is a family-owned one. Not many people can switch off and back then, I was not able to do that either. I paid a terrible price for it."

Under the stress and the endless working hours, Abdulla reached his darkest and deepest point, he suffered a depression, which caused his body to fail him.

"My body was actually quite strong for how much I took on. But depression and burnout builds up day-by-day, until the smallest event breaks you down. It is a gradual process that builds up to disaster. So, eventually I was very depressed indeed, and was struggling to find reasons to continue, as I'd reached the point when I was not happy with myself anymore."

Where and how did you find help?

"My beloved wife saw how depressed I was and was eager to help me in every way. Our family knows many influential people and she discovered that some of them have already used a sort of boutique healthcare service. It was something that was not accessible for the public."

In his state of depression, Abdulla was not able to see the positive outcomes, but his wife insisted on organizing an introductory call for him.

"She managed to introduce me and get me to be open and honest about my state of being. I can say looking back, that with that one phone call my whole world changed," - remembers Abdulla.

The program that Abdulla went through was a combination of physical checks and online consultations. Physical checks played an important role to understand the biological markers, and in addition to this, the program offered an emotional diagnosis as well.

"It was all about how your life comes together biologically, emotionally, and mentally. It was very intense and interesting, and at the same time I started to learn more about myself."

Was it easy to open up to someone you have never met before?

"Luckily, I am an open person in the way that I like to bring things out instead of keeping them inside. The first results came very quickly. Even so, deeper issues necessarily take longer, and it took me a fair amount of time to be where I am now. It was not an easy process, since I had damaged myself so much over so many years that it made it even harder for me."

After doing a 6-months program, Abdulla took a break because he felt like a new man and did not want to change some old habits so quickly. Old habits die hard. 18 months later, he felt something was going very wrong again, and reached out once again to his





consultant. He luckily started to do a new program because unknown to him, he was on the edge of a serious stroke.

The stroke happened about a week into the program. He now knows that if he hadn't gone back to the program, the stroke would have been much worse, and would have killed him.

Instead, he was partially paralyzed on the whole left side of his body which included his face slanting down and his speech slurring. At this point, Abdulla started to use the classical medical treatments in parallel with the consultations.

When was the moment when you realised that your treatment is actually working and the damage is reversing?

"I was in London at that time after my stroke as I had to do a lot of physiotherapy and was treated with antidepressants. However, I realised that instead of feeling better I was getting more depressed, and not recovering physically. On the other hand, I realised also that when I had my online sessions, I immediately became more relaxed, and the paralysis was dramatically better.

I told my consultant that I am scared and want to stop medications. My doctors said that I cannot recover without them insisting that I continue with them. Nevertheless, my consultant told me differently; he didn't say I should not take the medications because that would be against his ethics.

He asked me questions to look at the reality and the side effects. "What is really happening here? What is making you better – and what is making you worse?" He believed in me and suggested several solutions to try out during the healing process."

Abdulla had the courage to reduce the medication doses on his own volition, which he did in complete secret. After two months, he stopped the medicines completely without telling anybody.

"Everyone thought that the medicines are working. At one point, I decided to stop going to my doctors and put all my focus on my sessions. I recognised that I was much more energetic, strong, and positive than ever before. It was even hard for me to believe that I had reached this status without the traditional medicines, which had made me worse."

Do you believe that being spiritually strong is more important than having a good doctor?

"I have the best doctors in the world. On the other hand, without being spiritually or mentally strong and balanced, we cannot be in charge of our bodies.

I believe that for example, when a cancer patient gets chemotherapy, the same treatment can work on one and not on the other. This is because one is mentally strong and wants to live. While the other might accept the fact that this is the end. Of course, medical science is not that simple but a strong spirit has more willingness to live."

What did your family say when they realised that you have quit taking the medicines?

"My family loves me a lot but they were truly worried. So, in the beginning, I did not tell them I had stopped; it is natural that anyone who does not know there is another way would be against my decision. But in the end, they accepted that it was something between me and my specialist."



## Innovating a new era of health

After his full recovery from paralysis, Abdulla decided to invest more into futuristic health systems. Deciding to give back to others, he established the advanced humanised solutions company, Omère Longevity Institute, for innovating a new era of health and unlocking human potential.

Abdulla and his team have been collaborating with several experts and organisations from Switzerland, Germany, China, Italy, and the USA in various emerging fields of life science such as epigenetics and with biotech companies involved in technologies relating to biomarker diagnostics. Their focus is to bring together the best of all of these disciplines to develop a state-of-the-art program to reverse ageing and longevity.

Omère Longevity Institute's vision is to shape the future of ageing. Their mission is to catalyse the world's most innovative life sciences to enhance and extend human life.

What does Omère Longevity Institute mean for you?

"It is a sort of transformation; this is the future. It is an alternative healthcare system which provides organic and non-invasive methods to cases that normal medicine cannot handle, and for people who do not want it."

Abdulla believes in being fit and healthy in all aspects of life, including business and his day-to-day normal life activities, while constantly exploring new horizons.

With the first events held in May and June, he decided to personally introduce Omère Longevity Institute in the Principality of Monaco. His refreshing candor and ability to engage an audience have allowed Abdulla to share his own life experiences and the way the program helped his recovery from a seemingly impossible medical condition.



Based on your personal experience, how do people welcome new, advanced, non-traditional solutions?

“People see the difference in me, as I personally went through a difficult period with challenging medical conditions. Omère Longevity Institute offers a concept that is quite advanced and revolutionary in the healthcare sector. To bring it closer to people, I am always open to sharing my experiences - even the photos of my conditions and recoveries.

I believe that people who are advanced in thinking and aware, will understand the future. It is all about advanced techniques concerned with how you deal with your body.”

Abdulla argues that many medical treatments are based on 100 years old chemical combinations and this is not what humanity needs. This is the past, while the future of healthcare is understanding how your body reacts to things and how to evolve it into healing itself. His team believes that when you are in the right environment, your body can activate and react more effectively and positively.

“We believe in the reverse way, the human body develops diabetes or allergies which is simply based on the environment and living conditions you are in.”

The Omère Longevity Institute has two verticals. Omère Health is dedicated to curing serious medical indispositions as well as preventative measures to circumvent future ailments from manifesting. While Omère Youth is an age reversal program targeted at reducing the biological age.

The key is to understand our individual markers. Therefore, if someone signs up, the first step is to establish a full diagnosis which goes all the way starting from hereditary, cancer markers and all the others that are not active.

“The goal is to understand the genetic code of the individual person. Once we understand this, we have our own algorithm at our clinic and we create a bespoke program based on the individual’s needs.”

**“Omère Longevity Institute offers a concept that is quite advanced and revolutionary in the healthcare sector. It is an alternative healthcare system which provides organic and non-invasive methods to cases that normal medicine cannot handle.”**





The program is then designed to have either online sessions alone, or a combination of online and physical treatments at Omère Longevity Institute centers all around the world. The idea behind is to expand to the next step, which is the future of healthcare, and to develop several additional centers in key locations. One of their first centers was the LeCrans Resort in Switzerland, focusing on natural healing.

“LeCrans is more about traditional, non-invasive technology. The treatments are based on feeling good in general, including herbs and natural-based therapies. It is a very good first step, close to a spa experience, but at a much higher level or results to increase health markers.”

The LeCrans site in Switzerland is being redeveloped from what is already a beautiful and iconic wellness destination into a world-renowned health and healing centre. Additionally, Abdulla has plans for the world’s first Longevity Institute in Dubai as well as a new center under construction in New Zealand.

What is the typical age at the Omère Longevity Institute?

“My children and wife are also taking part in the sessions,” - laughs Abdulla. - “Our oldest client is in her 90s and before the program, she could not really walk. Now she can walk again.”

What was the biggest transformation for you based on this program?

“Besides the obvious physical recovery from paralysis, if I look back at my days at work, I used to be very depressed. I am a very sensitive person and was also emotionally imbalanced. You know, when someone is depressed they are always looking for the worse scenarios and cannot recognise the light in front of them.”

LeCrans forms an integral part of the programs, providing a residential treatment element for each type of program. The programs involve three core pillars:

Diagnostics – this involves diagnostics, biological, genetic and biomarker testing (over 200 tests), 5-Elementology analysis, and a customised bespoke program.

Clinic – includes a cutting edge hi-tech treatment and therapies at LeCrans, customised meals by on-site Michelin- starred chefs in consultation with healthcare experts.

University – this consists of private guided online sessions utilising a 5-Elementology life science technology.

In traditional Chinese medicine, the five elements theory outlines the relationship between the different





elements in nature and the life force, or “qi,” that flows through them. The basic elements are wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. Each individual is a blend of these elements, and to be truly healthy, they need to be balanced. Understanding how the five elements affect one’s health can help the doctor develop a comprehensive and effective treatment plan to eliminate chronic conditions.

What would your advice be to someone in the same shoes as you were a decade ago?

“To change is part of life as well as something useful, and we need all the help we can get to change. This is coming from a person who used to be very pessimistic,” - laughs again Abdulla. - “Being different is a good thing because it can be of great value as you see things from other perspectives. However, when you feel that you need change, trust in the help around you. I was lucky that my wife recognised my depression and was persistent enough to find the right solution for me.”

Your passion for Middle Eastern art and its revival on the world stage has led to your inclusion as a member of Tate’s Middle East North Africa Acquisitions Committee. What inspires you on a daily base?

“Now I am able to find inspiration inside of me. I have realised during my healing journey that you don’t need anyone or anything outside yourself to give that inspiration to you, it’s all within you.”

Abdulla’s passionate belief in people has inspired others to become more active and valuable contributors within AGCI & ESAG. He is an active Board member within the family group’s joint ventures, namely Al Gurg Fosroc, Siemens, Al Gurg Smollan, Al Gurg Unilever, Akzo Nobel Decorative Paints, and Siemens Healthineers. Abdulla is on the Board of Directors for the National Bank of Fujairah. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Charity Foundation and the Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Emirates E-Sports Federation.

Do you now work less than before?

“I can say that I work more efficiently. I am now on the board of the family business and my brother is the CEO.”

Which are the investment fields that interest you the most?

“I run my own family office which is highly focused on health care, life sciences, and new high-tech concepts. My bigger family’s goal and vision is to have more organic growth in all the sectors we are investing in.”

You have mentioned that you are coming from a very powerful family. Just to highlight, your mother is the most powerful Emirati Businesswoman in Forbes Middle East, she is among the 30 Most Powerful Arabs and also among the World’s 100 Most Powerful Women.

Although you are now more efficient in your work, you are still involved in multiple businesses. Parallel to this, you are also a father of four children namely Essa, Abdul Aziz, Mahra, and Mansoor Abdulla Al Gurg.

How do you see the pressure of responsibility on your children, is it the same as you experienced it with your legacy?

“No, not at all. I have to confess that I used to put pressure and expectations on my children before I started this program. That is how I grew up and how I was raised. But if you ask them now, they will say that I am a very soft father.

I changed a lot after my turning point and now I understand them more than ever. I am more available to be with my family and I am less imposing, while I do lay down certain conditions for them, as young people without any rules can get spoiled, lazy, and lost.”

What is the biggest value you would like to teach them about life?

“The kids have something that we adults do not have. They have the simplicity of life. As we grow older, we start to complicate our lives. My advice is to always try to look for simple joys and not to complicate your life. Because that’s the most beautiful thing in life and that’s when you will be able to live it to its fullest.”

Do you still maintain your inner child?

“I am trying to grow up. I was stuck for long as a 12 years old inside,” - laughs Abdulla as we finish the interview with him.

Abdulla’s story of healing and committing himself to give back to those who are open to healing in natural organic ways brings a sense of faith and hope to many stuck in old patterns. His positive and open attitude and knowing that everything matters and is possible if we believe in it brings delight.

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