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Another Book on Attitude?

Yes, but One with a Slight Kick!

Long introductions bore me, so let's skip the mumbo jumbo and jump in!

Before you can grasp the real concept of this book and get value out of the following pages, let's start with a quick exercise in which you will appraise the state of your attitude. If you don't know its current state, value, or condition, then you won't have a benchmark from which to work.

Let me ask you a few simple questions. Think about them before you answer.

1. How much would you pay for your attitude?
2. How much would you sell it for?

Have you ever thought about what your attitude is really worth to you? Let's find out. We are going to place an advertisement in the paper to sell your attitude, so let's fill in the answers to some questions.

“Attitude for Sale!”

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being awesome), what is the condition of your attitude? _____

How many minutes a day do you work on your attitude or study it by reading positive material, listening to positive audios, and associating with positive people? _____

If your attitude was a horse in a race, what place would it come in? _____

Do you treat your attitude like a diamond or a pet rock? _____

If your attitude was a magnet, what three things would stick to it? _____

Do you let others choose your attitude or do you choose it yourself? _____

Is your attitude more like an unmovable boulder or a sand castle on the beach? _____

How many times a week do you complain about something? _____

How many times a week do you laugh? _____

How many times a week do you blame others? _____

Is your attitude in good shape or is it lazy? _____

What percentage of your success in life would you attribute to your attitude? _____

What price do you want to sell your attitude for? _____

Changed My Mind. Attitude Not for Sale. Too Priceless!

I think you get the general idea. It seems a little silly, but think about it. How much do you really *value* your attitude? How much do you understand your attitude and all its abilities? Are you aware that your attitude is a big part of your life or do you only think about it when someone mentions, “Hey, you better get positive!” or “Stop being so negative”?

What jumper cables are to a car battery, this book is to your attitude.

Some of the best advice I ever received is always to have a pair of jumper cables in the trunk of the car, just in case. Nobody ever really defines “just in case,” but somewhere along the way, you discover what it means, and often more than once. The car battery dies and you need that jump start. Not all of us, however, take action on good insights. Meaning, we don’t always act on the knowledge we have. Knowledge without action lacks power, but implementing what we know creates power. The result of not executing what we know is that we experience the “just in cases” in life and find ourselves stuck on the side of the road with no jumper cables.

I am a victim of that, too. I didn't listen to the "jumper cable advice" the first time it was given to me. I put off getting them, and it bit me when I could not get my car started in the dead of winter.

When this happens to you and you are searching for jumper cables from others, you end up "stuck," frustrated, and wondering, "What do I do?!"

Life is filled with unexpected adversities that knock the "kick" out of us. Our *kick*, as I will define it in this book, is the energy and life in our attitude. Have you ever had a time in your life when you felt like you were getting your butt kicked by adversity? I have—and on more than one occasion. The result of getting kicked around by life's challenges is that we can be drained of our passion, enthusiasm, sense of humor, desire to persevere or try again, determination, patience, courage, positive outlook, and more.

Most people who read the title of this book think, "I know someone who could use this book, or who could use a good kick in the attitude!" I have actually heard people say that out loud. I think we all know someone who could use a good jolt or kick to the attitude. In order for us to maximize more of our potential in life and work the way we were born to, we need that positive charge in life.

Now, you may argue, "Sam, I am already pretty positive."

My response is, "Great! However, I have a cell phone. It's pretty positive, too, for most of the day, but at the end of the day I still need to recharge it in order for it to work the way it was intended."

We live in a world designed to deplete us of our positive charge; Would you agree? Someone cut you off on the way to work; you forgot your wallet; another bill at the end of the

month was more than you expected; someone ate your tuna salad in the refrigerator at work; your favorite sports team lost again; budget cuts; the temp stole from the supply room; your social life got boring; you fought with the spouse; someone forgot to put the dog out; the weather; government, news—the list can go on and on and it always will. Norman Vincent Peale said the only people without problems are those in a cemetery. The first time I heard that quote, I thought, “Man, I am not ready to go without problems. Bring them on!”

Bold statement, but if I have to deal with problems anyway, why not make the effort to put some martial arts into my attitude so I can come out a winner?

The fact of the matter is that it's easy to have a positive attitude when everything is good. But what about when life throws you a curve ball and you find yourself face-to-face with adversity? My definition of adversity is an unscheduled appointment to wrestle with your attitude and your situation. If your attitude isn't in good shape, adversity can whip your butt. Are you willing to settle for defeat? Or are you tired of seeing yourself and your loved ones flattened by adversity, and ready to do something about it?

Adversity will not think twice about flattening your tires and draining your battery. Adversity doesn't care about your feelings or how nice or good a person you are. Adversity is an element we all have to face. We get caught up, overloaded, uptight, and stressed out. We experience a setback at work, personal loss, or a problem with our physical or mental health. Or, life may simply become too routine and monotonous, causing us to level off and just go with the flow. As a result, we stop going for it, dreaming, creating, and becoming what we want to be. We skim by because we are tired and lack energy.

It's difficult to keep a positive and energized attitude on a single charge. No matter how positive you might be, you need a positive *recharge* from time to time. Would you agree? The unbalance of daily demands and unexpected adversities can knock the kick right out of you.

Perhaps you are sitting at the side of the road right now in a car that won't start. Your attitude battery is out of juice. You're on empty with depression, frustration, or a negative frame of mind. Maybe you've lost your job, your spouse, your favorite shoes, or even parts of your identity. Maybe life has thrown you so many unexpected challenges that you are living in fear, filled with anxiety and doubt. Your attitude has taken a sharp turn south and you feel like you are walking in a cold shower.

If your thoughts and focus are not right or not working in your favor, you need to shock your system to break the pattern or current track you are on in order to get out of the habit of thinking negatively and onto a track that benefits your life.

It's super simple. What jumper cables are to a car battery, this book is to your attitude. You don't want to be without it. Have it close by so that when your attitude battery is running low or you just need a simple adjustment or some positive maintenance, you are not left stranded and stuck wondering what to do, or how to get out of your predicament. It will ensure that you get and keep a positively charged life. In order to thrive despite whatever comes our way, we need to keep that positive charge strong. This is what it means to get a kick in the attitude.

It seems everyone is on the lookout for the "New Thing," be it a concept, a secret, or a foolproof formula for happiness and success. Let me point out up front, what you are about to read is not anything new. I don't have any secrets for you or special formulas. I will instead simply give you my perspective,

a fresh presentation of material that has been around for thousands of years. So why read something old?

My stuff is old school. But it works, and was designed specifically for you.

I am guessing a lot of people will struggle with the simplicity of my message because we live in a time when we tend to overcomplicate things. But why would you look for that concept to change “everything” in your life when you have diamonds of information all around you that simply need to be unearthed?

I’m going to take you back to the basics that work, creating achievement, success, and happiness. The process will be entertaining and interactive. I didn’t spend years writing, studying, researching, and investing my life to bore you, but rather to inspire you.

This book just happens to be my perspective and it may or may not be one with which you connect. If you don’t, it’s not my fault or yours. It is what it is.

If we know a positive attitude can make life better, then why doesn’t everyone have one?

Hmmmmm. . . .

Let’s face it, “attitude” isn’t rocket science, yet if we know a positive attitude can make life better, then why doesn’t everyone have one? It’s simple. Either:

- People don’t care.
- People don’t get it.

- People see insufficient intrinsic value in their attitudes to work on them daily, instead ignoring their assets as it collects dust and wastes away.

A concept I learned from Dr. William Glasser is that all life will ever give you is information and how you interpret that information determines your outcome, feelings, and experiences. In his book *Choice Theory*, he teaches people how to take responsibility for their own lives, rather than trying to control the lives of others. A better attitude will create a better interpretation of life's information, which will completely change your life. You don't need a secret concept. You simply need to be aware of the power of your attitude, and realize how to charge it and keep it charged. You need to relearn the basics so that you can thrive.

In the book, I may seem like I am saying the same thing over and over again, but the purpose is to condition your mind so you get it, got it, and then live it.

When I played basketball, my coach never shared a newly released concept to improve the way we played, but he did stick with what works—core fundamentals. And it wasn't enough to know them; we had to do what we knew. That's why so many people struggle today. They know what they need to do to change their lives for the better, but they don't do what they know. The reason again is that they don't care enough, are too lazy, or just don't get it. This book is about putting what you know into positive action.

The core fundamentals of success haven't changed with time and no matter what your circumstance is, they can still work for you to get the results you want. Why do you think "fundamentals" were the key to success for former UCLA basketball coach John Wooden, who won 19 NCAA conference

championships? He won with clearly defined fundamentals put into action. He didn't reinvent the wheel each new season when he got new players with unique personalities, backgrounds, and challenges. He applied what works and moves people toward success—the fundamentals. Are your core fundamentals for achieving your desired goals clearly defined? Do you need to review them, update them, and examine where you apply them? Remember, the seasons will change, but the fundamentals work the same way in all seasons.

I am not saying that my way is the only way. I am offering some ideas that I have found that work. If you can get one good idea out of this book that will set your attitude in a positive direction, ignite your passion, get you the result you want, would that be worth it for you?

The initial manuscript of this book was written for one person—*me!* It was actually my journal. I found that I was often referring to the notes and realizing something new every time I read the same material. I forget things easily, so I created something to remind me of the attitude fundamentals. That way, if I ever got off track, I would have a guide to bring me back—bread crumbs, so to speak. What turned my personal journal into a book? you might ask. I met other people who needed that positive charge for their attitudes, and so I shared my notebook of attitude fundamentals. They shared it with others, and so on, until it became like a positive virus that was healing negative attitudes everywhere.

I should also quickly mention up front, I have an intense case of ADD (attention deficit disorder). I don't take medication. I just live with the entertainment of what I have. An ADDer pays attention to the most sparkly thing in the room. And books these days are not always ADD friendly. They might have a cool looking cover and title, but then you open them up and you're

like, “Oh, man . . . work!” You think, “I will get to it another time,” and yet you never do.

I remember appearing at an event years ago during which the introduction for a motivational speaker preceding me included the statement that he had read 700 books. (I think it was to build credibility. Who knows?) I thought, “Wow. I have tried to read 700 books, but they didn’t have sticking power.”

Just for fun, I changed up my introduction and told the audience, “I am sorry; I haven’t read 700 books, but I did listen to the first speaker read his 700 books out loud.” It got a good laugh.

Isn’t it frustrating when you buy a book, and after reading a few pages, you begin to think about what you need to get at the store, or who you forgot to call back, or why the earth is round? We all have that distractibility to a degree, but multiply it, and you have ADD. I like to cater to my fellow ADDers, and I think you will get a kick out of it as well, even if you don’t have ADD. I don’t want to waste time, and I want this information to stick, so there are surprises along the way to keep you engaged. My book is what I call “ADD friendly.”

Along those lines, I had an e-mail from a 12-year-old girl recently, and here is what she said: “Dear Sam, I am twelve years old and the reason I am writing is about your book. I got into some trouble at school and was grounded to my room. No TV. No Internet. No nothing. My mom handed me your book to read while I was grounded, and I just threw it across the room. I sat there for hours, and then for some reason, I picked it up to flip through it. At first, I thought, ‘Another book to read . . . Ahhh!’ Then I started to read your stories about falling off the airplane and having toilet paper stuck to your pants and I started laughing so hard and loud, my mom thought I was watching TV and came in my room to scold me. But I showed

her I was reading your book, and I finished it. Not only that, I have reread it and keep it on my nightstand. I told all my friends about you and that they need to get your book. This book has changed my life. I don't get in trouble anymore, and I have a better focus of what I want in life. Also, I think you are funny."

How do you respond when you get a book on the subject of attitude put before you? Even if we don't physically throw it across the room, we often do so mentally. To counteract that desire, I've tried to make this book as fun and easy to swallow as possible.

Maybe you live with someone who is highly negative and you are very positive and you battle thoughts on, "What can I do?" Or you may be a manager, or someone who would like to influence others . . .

A lot of times, we want to change people, but we can't, no matter how hard we try. It's frustrating . . . I know. It's like the old saying goes, "You can lead a horse to the water, but you can't force the horse to drink." One of my goals in this book is to give you some hope about how to teach people to drink something good. If that doesn't work, then maybe you could gift them this book, or a Happy Meal (more on that later).

A couple more practical details. You don't have to read this book all at once. You don't eat a whole buffet of good food at one sitting, do you? No. You keep coming back for more to nurture your body when you are hungry and need a boost.

Mark Up This Book

Underline what you like. Write notes in the margins. Think about what you read and let it soak in, then make it yours. I left room in the back of the book for you to scribble, doodle, and

write your reflections. You can also answer the Attitude in Action questions here, which are posted at the end of each chapter (but I also have questions throughout some of the chapters, so keep your eye out for opportunities to write).

If you are taking yourself seriously, get yourself a spiral-bound journal. It's the easiest kind to lay on the table.

Now . . . take in a nice, deep breath, and allow yourself to embrace the experience that these pages are ready to create for you. Stop every now and then to reflect on your life, because this is all about you. Think about where you are, where you want to go, and what you need to get there. Jot down your own ideas. When you put this book down and go back to your daily activities, I want you to feel energized and empowered. I want you to find your kick, use it, and keep it.

Attitude in Action

How much is your attitude truly worth? Do the attitude-for-sale exercise earlier in this chapter, and write your answers at the end of the book or in your journal.

Participate in the "Attitude Works" Movement. Go to EverythingAttitude.com and join thousands who have declared that Attitude Works. If you have a story of how attitude has worked in your life, e-mail it to us.