



Mentor: The Kid & the CEO: A Simple Story of Overcoming Challenges and Achieving Significance

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Tony has run-ins with the law and no direction in life until he meets Malcolm, a businessman who has faced many of the same challenges. Because Malcom is willing to share his knowledge and experience with Tony, they both become successful and significant. There are setbacks for both student and teacher, but with hope and action they overcome their difficulties. This uplifting story is a quick and easy read. Inspired by actual events, this book shows anyone how to overcome challenges. It demonstrates the importance of sharing this information with others so they have the opportunity to grow and establish a successfull life, despite the odds.

Mentor: The Kid & the CEO: A Simple Story of Overcoming Challenges and Achieving Significance Details

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Janelle says

This book literally arrived in the mail with a note from a stranger telling me I needed to read it. I'm on a state-wide mentoring council so I'm sure someone googled me and then passed it on, but it was still a fun surprise. I read it within hours of receiving it. I've read a lot of inspirational tales and in social work have worked with a lot of inspiring people, clients, staff and volunteers. But this book is up there in terms of motivation and inspiration. It's told in a simple, straightforward manner. It's not preachy, and is pretty universal in it's story, it's not about God or religion, but about living a good life, practicing healthy habits and building routines into your life. The characters have flaws and strengths and learn from one another. It's an approachable book and I plan to pass this book on to friends and colleagues. It's such a short read that I think anyone could benefit from taking the time to read it. One of my favorite parts is that the bottom of each page features a little inspiring mantra. It ties into a website and some interactive links that help you to develop your "dream list." There's also a long list of book recs in the appendix - many of which I've added to my GoodReads page.

Sandy says

Really easy read. It's for those of us who can't quite find a mentor. It gives you as close to a first-person experience of one as possible. I recommend getting the workbook along with the story. It stepped me through how to look at the story and apply the concepts to my own life.

Takeaway:

Support your employees in their endeavors, even if that's leaving the company to start their own.

Vicky says

Uplifting, feel good story with morals. Short easy read, motivational.

Andy Heavilin says

This book was written as a primer for the concept of mentoring. It conveys, in story form, the importance of a mentor's role in ones life to give direction, discipline and hope. However, instead of just being a book about "shoulds" it follows the adage "show don't tell" and walks us through the journey of Tony. Tony's aimless life is headed nowhere fast and we can see the futility of his thinking and propensity for victim hood. As Tony slowly emerges from him intellectual and motivational stupor, we find Malcolm as his guiding light towards a new life.

Overall the story reads quickly and while isn't going to win any awards for amazing plot twists (although there is one near the end that I appreciated) this book readily achieves its goal. Anyone unfamiliar with the concept of mentoring and self-improvement will get a clear picture of the advantages and achievement possible with a little help.

I think this book would make a great gift for either younger people with potential that lack focus or perhaps older people that haven't had the opportunities for intellectual and emotional growth.

Two other nice features about the book were a helpful reading list in the back and small motivational phrases subtly placed at the bottom of each page.

Carolina Casas says

I read this one sitting. I didn't think I was going to enjoy it. I was not required to read it, rather the students for the professor I was subbing for did but after chapter 3, the things the author said resonated with me. Not because I have been through the ordeals he went through or disappointed my loved ones like he did, but because of his straightforwardness. Many authors who tend to write inspirational books tend to sound preachy and go around in circles. This makes them come off as disingenuous. Tom Pace doesn't. He transports himself -and the reader- back to this nineteenth year where all he cared about was ... well, nothing except living the moment. "It is just a beer." "It is not fair." How many of us have said this a million times over thinking that the solution is going to drop from the sky and we will finally be free of all burdens? We've all been there. I have had many moments in my life where I thought about giving up and concentrate on cursing those who were (rightly or not) to blame for my situation. There comes a point where you have to choose between a victim and acknowledging that regardless of who's to blame for your problems, you have to push your self-pity aside and stand up.

There are going to be many bumps along the road. No one said it was going to be easy. Tom finds many people willing to help him as he does those who can't stand his success and will make him doubt himself. The latter's words never stop hurting. But just as I have come to realize that I can't erase what the dastardly ogres have said and done, Tom decides to focus on his goal and keep moving forward.

There is nothing stronger than that. If you think this is another inspirational book that is meant to make you feel good and forget all your troubles. You are wrong. Tom doesn't sugar coat his reality nor does he tell you to change your life or else. That choice is yours alone. All he does is tell you his story in the hope that it pushes you to add a new chapter to your life, one where you focus more on a brighter -but realistic- tomorrow instead of continuing on a morose path that will lead to nothing but misery and broken dreams.

Summer Jaramillo says

This book is about a young man who is 19 named Tony who gets into trouble with the law and finds himself in jail for the second time. He always blames his mistakes on other people. Tony always refuses to participate in anything so he just sits in his cell. Until one day a man who has a big reputation in the jail tells Tony that he is only young and he has a hole future ahead of him and to go to a man named Malcoms class and do whatever he tells him to. Scared of this this guys he end up going to the class and meets Malcom, Malcom is a really successful man who is always talking about how important it is to have a mentor. At the end of the session he hands out a book and Tony quickly grabs it knowing he needs some type of proof that he went. Slowly he starts to read the book and finds that he relates to a lot of parts in it. He even stays to talk

to Malcom one on one, their relationship grows closer and closer as time passes. The two end up learning from each other and unlike everyone else in Tonys life Malcom listens to what tony has to say, and Tony ends up being there for Malcom not only as a student but as close friend. Malcolm shows Tony to set goals he can actually reach and starts to mentor him. When Tony is released from jail he continues to meet with Malcolm and they continue to help each other through every up and down no matter how tough things get.

In my opinion this is a really inspiring book, a cliff hanger, and it never gets boring at any points. That's a lot coming from me, because I tend to get board/doze off during most books. There is so much more to this book then just how a boy gets in and out of jail with the help of a mentor. It's about friendship,hard work,and commitment.

Kate says

This book came to me in the mail at the school where I work, unsolicited. That and the \$50 guarantee on the back made me roll my yes, expecting this to be some kind of evangelizing self-help book. I like building my classroom library, so I didn't want to turn away a free book. However, I wanted to read a few chapters first to get a sense of the book. I ended up finishing the whole thing that night. So there were definitely parts that were eye rolling worthy as far as how simply situations worked out in this fairy tale, but I decided to put it in my library anyway because the basic life lessons were reasonable and the evangelizing was minimal.

Nimit Patel says

I am even blessed to already have solid mentorship in my life, but I learned a lot from reading this book that my mother had given me a long time ago. I finally read it and I definitely needed to read some of the things in this book at this time in my life. Get back in touch with the simplicity of success and power of routine.

Tyson says

Thought provoking and yet a quick read. Not beautifully written but both practical and inspiring, particularly the part that demonstrates how simple starting one's own business can be.

Cliff notes: Exercise, read, take action, get a mentor, institute positive routines. Not earth-shakingly original, but solid, timeless wisdom nonetheless.

David says

Finding the right book recommendation can be such a difficult task. What might resonate with one person might totally miss the mark with another. This is one of those books I would highly recommend depending on my target audience. While the book is not complex or masterfully written, it definitely delivers on a number of levels. It is accessible to all reading levels and definitely might be the absolute perfect book for any of my students who are struggling to find meaning and purpose in life. I appreciate so much what the author was trying to accomplish and I love the constant reminders on each page of how to live a life of

purpose. Those ideas and the importance of reading that is woven throughout the book are lessons everyone can stand a refresher on. I am so excited to recommend this to a number of my students and I 100% think this book packs enough punch to change people's lives.

Niki says

I think this could be inspirational, and certainly made me think about taking action on a few things in my life, but I find inconsistencies in a book distracting while I am reading. Because I had to stop & wonder why, how, whether I really read that right or if I missed something, I can't give it more stars, although I love the local tale (OKC) & success story.

Lynn Green says

On the back of the book there is the claim, "Tony's [the book's narrator and protagonist] story will change your life." I have always been skeptical of such claims, particularly when made of a "self-help" book. And this one didn't (so far) change my life. However, I am probably not the book's primary target audience.

Mentor, written by Tom Pace with Walter Jenkins, told from the point of view of a young man named Tony, age 19, who is sent to jail for a parole violation and faces the real possibility of going to prison for several years. While in jail awaiting sentencing, he goes to a group therapy session run by a businessman named Malcolm who offers all who come the hope of turning their lives around. At first, Tony is skeptical and barely listens to Malcolm, just glad to escape the boredom of jail life. However, in a fairly short amount of time, largely due to the encouragement of a "lifer" convicted of murder, Tony attends, listens and becomes interested.

Malcolm stays to talk to Tony and gives him the book "The Greatest Miracle in the World" by Og Mandino to read. Tony doesn't read the book at first, but finally, with Malcolm's encouragement reads the book and begins a life-changing journey. Malcolm acts as Tony's mentor, and when Tony is released from jail without having to go to prison (due to his good behavior), Malcolm is there for him to offer guidance and encouragement. As is typical for these stories, Tony, by following Malcolm's sage advice, and through his own hard work and perseverance, succeeds as a person, a businessman, and a family man. (Tony goes to church and there meets the love of his life.)

All through the book, in the bottom margins, are bits of wisdom and advice like "finish what you start," "have integrity," "have values," "save 10 percent," "read books," and so on.

I respond to this book on different levels, wearing different hats.

My book critic hat, for example, says that this is a pretty average plot line. The conflicts are resolved rather quickly with little dilemma. Malcolm introduces Tony to Gary, also an ex-con who now owns a backhoe business. It just so happens that Gary has a need for some extra help. Surprisingly, it takes a chapter or two for Gary to realize that Malcolm is the answer to his problem. Malcolm later gets into financial trouble and faces a class action lawsuit. He solves this problem by selling some of his property, and the suit is dismissed as "frivolous." Great plots are not this neat. The Joads have no property to sell to get them out of their troubles. They mortgaged it away long before they are dispossessed.

However, when I look at the advice the book offers, I am pleased with it. The advice is simple, mainly involving taking responsibility for yourself and working hard to achieve your dreams. Simple is often good and the advice is good in this simple form. My students, many of whom have already made some wrong choices (I have several fathers and mothers in my English 11 class.), should heed the advice in the book. The book is easy to read and moves quickly. Mr. Pace has made several copies of the book available to my school and others in our district. I plan to use them.

The next hat I put on is my teacher hat. I can use this book to further some lessons I have been teaching this year, particularly those involving the Heroic Archetype. Tony is on a journey, a quest for significance. He follows many aspects of the archetype, particularly, as the title says, having a mentor. He also descends into the "belly of the beast", both the jail and his own limited thinking, rises out of the depths to fight his enemies, those of his inner character. He emerges victorious and brings something good from his life: a business, a family, an opportunity to mentor others.

However, the last hat I wear is my social hat. Pace's philosophy is one of individual initiative and personal responsibility. It is a philosophy rooted deep in the American psyche and includes adherents as American as Ben Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Dale Carnegie. (Tony reads "How to Win Friends and Influence People.") It's the American ideal of "rugged individualism." I have no quarrel with those who remind us that we are ultimately the ones responsible for our lives. However, we are not in this alone. We cannot ignore larger social forces at work that create the Tonys of our country. Poverty is not just an individual problem. Pace only hints at the larger social forces at work in America. Tony at first cannot find a job because businesses won't hire felons. He is lucky to be living with Gary when Gary, a convicted felon and therefore sympathetic to Tony's plight, develops the need for another employee. Pace also never mentions Tony's race, probably for good reason, but we cannot ignore the fact that race and poverty have become in inexorably intertwined in America.

Yes, we need individual action; my students need to take action to move their lives in a positive direction. We need self-help books, but we need just as much "social-help books" and social mentors. We do have them in America, books like "Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America" by Barbara Ehrenreich and mentors like Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund.

Too many individual responsibility advocates look at these voices and claim that these community organizers somehow shirk our need for individual responsibility. Such is not the case. Instead, they make us aware of the systems we have in place in this country that have led to the largest gap between rich and poor in our nation's history, and they make us ask, "why?" Are the millions of poor people in this country simply lazy? Is there not something wrong about a person working full time at minimum wage and still being far below the poverty line?

Of course, that is not the focus of Pace's book. Where he is focused, he does well. My students would do well, or at least much better, if they followed his advice. For that reason, this book, will be good for them. As I said, I plan to use it.

Kym McNabney says

The MENTOR: The Kid & The CEO, is a must read for all. It's well written and reads like a great novel. Positivity, optimistic, perseverance. This is the attitude and way of life everyone one should be striving for. This book will bring hope and encouragement to those down on their luck, thinking life has nothing to offer

them. It really cements the idea that our own thinking and actions can either make or break us. In the end it is up to you. To have mentors throughout your life is vital, and having God as the center of your life is a must.

I found myself continually saying, "Yes, yes." I loved how Malcolm made it a point to teach both Tony and Gary what is needed to be a good person as well as successful in life...in all areas of their life. We can all learn something from this book whether it be from Tony's perspective, that with the right attitude, good morals and hard work, you can do anything. Or from Malcolm whom we witness the importance of looking beyond ourselves and doing for others. After all, isn't that what God has called us to do, and in doing so we end up being a winner as well.

You reap what you sow, so sow well.

Kara Belden says

At the beginning of November, I received a fairly cryptic email stating that I would be sent this book in the mail. The book finally landed in my mailbox last week with a personalized letter explaining why I needed to read it. At this point, I was pretty intrigued but still very skeptical, especially because of the offer on the back (If you don't find this book worth your while, call me and tell me why, and I'll give you \$50). I took it home from school on Friday to take a chance on it. I read it in its entirety on Saturday.

"Mentor: The Kid and the CEO" is about Tony and Malcolm. Tony gets himself into trouble (again) and lands himself a 90-day jail sentence that could turn into 7 years if he doesn't behave himself this time. Tony is the kid. An outsider named Malcolm visits the prison every Monday to counsel the inmates. Malcolm is the CEO. Both parties get to play mentor.

So, the book has two distinct targeted audiences:

- (1) any adults working with and mentoring at-risk youth
- (2) at-risk youth, first-time offenders, incarcerated youth, adolescent boys prone to taking risks without considering consequences

The book is SUPER SIMPLE and aims to foster hope and combat learned helplessness. Let me be clear: there's a LOT that the book leaves out about Tony's story prior to being incarcerated, but I wasn't bothered by any of that. Clearly, a million different factors could have impacted Tony's story and trajectory in life; that's not the point of the book. Throughout reading the book, I kept thinking about this quote I have in my classroom: "We cannot concern ourselves so much with 'fair.' As the old adage goes, 'life isn't fair,' and education should prepare students for life. Life may not be fair, but it is predictable in a statistically significant way; success generally follows hard work, doing something is typically more effective than doing nothing, and asking questions leads to answers."

As soon as I finished the book, I knew exactly which students I wanted to specifically recommend it to, but I do think many adolescents will enjoy it, so I plan on book talking it soon. I have already recommended it to a few colleagues.

I should note that I personally enjoyed the book, too, as a reminder of the importance of a trusted mentor as well as a reminder to always keep learning and bettering myself.

Deb Maynard says

I loved this book for its simplicity and power. Very motivating.
